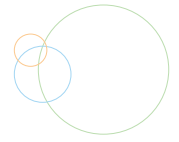


# Physical Therapy News



## Smartphone Induced Neck Pain



Smartphones are an essential part of the new world that we live in. They help boost productivity and enable us to stay connected. On the flip side, excessive use of smartphones can cause a variety of problems. Neck pain, back pain, and tenderness in the joints of the hands can at times, be attributed to excessive use of smartphones. In fact, 'text neck' is a phrase that's used to describe headaches, shoulder pain and arm pain due to excessive text messaging.



Individuals who spend hours slouched on the couch using their phones for texting, emailing, or even gaming tend to experience the most discomfort. This can also lead to constant pain in the thumbs and wrists due to inflammation of the tendons. This is a condition called De Quervains disease. Physical therapy offers a number of treatment options for patients with this type of joint pain and inflammation.

## Pain in the Neck?

Although the impact of smartphones seems trivial, it is not something that should be taken lightly since it can result in pain, discomfort and lost productivity. Physical therapists not only help with treatment, but also with prevention of smartphone induced neck and back pain. Your therapist can offer a variety of treatments to help patients with 'smartphone induced' symptoms, allowing them to experience pain relief and regain normal function. Medical treatment helps to reduce pain and inflammation, but physical therapy plays a vital role in the restoration of joint mobility and muscle strength.

Physical therapy treatments include:

- Splinting – Offers rest to the joints in the hands and restricts active movement, which facilitates healing.
- Hot/cold packs – Increase blood flow and reduce inflammation as needed.



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- Muscle stretching - Muscles in the neck and hands can become tight, which results in movement restriction. Stretching exercises can help reduce pain and inflammation while increasing range of motion.
- Resistive exercises - An increase in muscle strength helps reduce pain and restore the ability to complete normal, daily activities.
- Manual therapy – Soft tissue massage (to target deep muscles in the neck and shoulder region) and joint mobilizations are specialized treatments by physical therapists. These treatments have a significant impact in pain relief and range of motion.

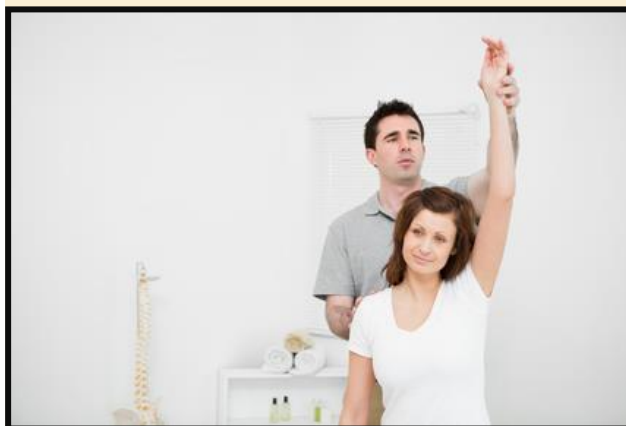
The physical therapist may also determine that posture is an issue that needs to be addressed. For example, if you spend several hours cradling the phone between your head and neck, your therapist will teach you important strategies like switching sides, stretching and the use of headsets. Simple things can save you a pain in the neck. For example, setting down the phone every 20 minutes and standing up from your desk, stretching the muscles every 30 minutes and taking a break to allow your eyes to relax are easy and powerful strategies to protect your body from the impact of smartphones.

## The Smart Step

Never before have we depended so much on technology to help us with everything in our daily lives. The problem is - an increase in technology may result in a decrease in physical activity and movement. If you depend on technology like smartphones (and other devices like laptops, computers), consider the long-term impact on your posture, joint movements and muscle strength.

The truth is - innovation and technology are growing faster than anyone ever imagined. This makes it even more important to take care of the body, and protect it against the inadvertent, yet harmful effects of smartphones and other devices.

Please tell  
your family  
and friends  
about us.



Give our office a call if you are experiencing any discomfort, swelling, or pain as a result of your smartphone. You may be surprised to find that the culprit is that tiny little device you've become so dependent upon in recent times. There is a lot that physical therapists can do for you that you probably didn't even know about. You'll be

surprised with the extent to which physical therapy can change your life.