



Advance Physio Clinic

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Advance Physio Clinic

2 Trevino Way
Cranbourne North
Victoria 3977
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Clinic Services:

- Neck and low back pain, neck, thoracic and lumbar disc bulges
- Sciatica
- Headaches/Migraines
- Clinical Pilates
- Rehabilitation after surgery, stroke and vehicle accidents
- Work injuries
- Sporting injuries

Clinic Hours:

Monday to Friday: 9am-7pm
Saturday: 9am - 12pm

Tech Neck! Is Technology Affecting Our Patient's Health?

As our lives continue to get busier, and our world is increasingly overrun by new technologies, the time patients spend in front of both the computer and television is steadily rising. But is this increasingly sedentary lifestyle causing long term damage to our patient's health that extends beyond those conditions commonly reported?

As you are aware, the link between inactivity and the long term risk factors associated with a sedentary lifestyle have been well documented for many years. But are our patients susceptible to other problems that are not so talked about, and how can we help our patients to decrease the risk of developing injury in the future?

At Advance Physio Clinic, one of the most common conditions we see is pain or tightness in the cervical spine. Quite often, this is also associated with regular headaches that are felt at the base of the occiput, in the forehead or in the orbital region. We have affectionately begun to term such conditions as 'Tech Necks', as the origin of pain generally results from poor posture related to large periods of time in front of the computer or television. When our patients sit in these positions for extended periods of time, they will typically adopt a posture characterized by a protracted chin, increased thoracic kyphosis and rounded shoulders. This then places increased forces through the joints, muscles and nerves of the neck, which over time, can lead to neck pain, headaches, or a combination of both.

How can we help our patients prevent neck pain and headaches:

It is important that we encourage our patients to maintain a good posture in order to help prevent conditions associated with poor posture in the future. Some simple advice to help achieve this may be:

1. **Taking a break** from work/study, sitting in front of the computer, or watching television every 30 minutes. This should involve getting up and walking around the room which allows for spinal tissues to be exercised, thus reducing postural strain.
2. **Customise the chair**– Advising patients to adjust the height of their chair such that their knees are level or just below hip height and that their feet are flat on the floor. If their seat has a pelvic tilt, this should be set to a slight forward incline to promote a natural inward lower back curve
3. **Rearrange the desk**- Set the desk to elbow height, as a desk too high can lead to poor posture and the associated problems. If they use a fixed height surface, you may wish to suggest installing a keyboard and mouse that can be adjusted to the correct height. Also, their arms should be at right angles to the shoulder when they type, and the mouse should be close to the keyboard to prevent excessive reaching during use.
4. **Reposition the computer monitor** – It is helpful to advise patients place their monitor at arm's length and make sure the top of the screen is eye level when sitting up straight. The monitor and keyboard should sit directly in front so as to prevent twisting of the neck while working, studying or playing games.

If your patients take the simple steps outlined above, you will help to ensure the health of their spine for years to come. However, should you believe your patients are suffering from neck pain or headaches that require further attention, or you simply believe some postural education would be beneficial to help prevent future complications, please contact Advance Physio Clinic, or refer your patients for an appointment with one of our experienced therapists.