[IMAGE]

When Technology Causes Pain

By Editorial Staff

It's all parents can do these days to keep their overstimulated, technology-crazed children from spending all day on their smartphones, laptops, tablets and video game consoles. While technology continues to improve our lives in many ways, not the least of which is our ability to access information – a good thing when raising our children, if appropriately managed – a major drawback of the same technology is repetitive-stress injuries. Hour after endless hour typing, texting and scrolling can put the arms and wrists in particular at risk for injury; not to mention how poor posture caused by hunching over a keyboard or peering into a tiny screen can impact the back, neck and shoulders.

Case in point: A recent study of teens (12-16 years old) found that "compared with those using the computer less than 3.6 hours / week, computer use of ≥ 14 hours / week was associated with moderate/severe increase in computer-associated musculoskeletal pain at all anatomic sites, and moderate / severe inconvenience to everyday life due to low back and head pain."

health alert - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark You might think that 14 hours a week or more of computer use is a little extreme, but not if you consider that's only two hours a day. Teens in particular likely spend that much, if not much more, on a computer every day, whether doing homework or browsing the Internet.

Solving the problem involves several strategies:

- Limit screen time whenever possible, or at least limit the amount of time your teen spends on the computer at any given stretch.
- Speaking of stretching, teach them to take breaks every 1/2 hour or so to stretch and ensure they haven't been sitting in one position for too long.
- Talk to your doctor of chiropractic about the best ways to minimize injury risk. Your chiropractor can give you and your teen advice on proper posture and other tips for avoiding pain in the Age of Technology.

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