

[IMAGE]

## The Perils of Chronic Neck Pain

By Editorial Staff

Chronic neck pain is frustrating enough; but some of its potential consequences can be just as, if not more troubling. Consider new research that suggests chronic neck pain, coupled with neck fatigue, can negatively impact posture and balance.

Researchers evaluated 25 adult patients with chronic neck pain and 25 healthy adults without chronic pain. Members of both groups performed standing shoulder flexion (lifting the arms out in front and up) before and after a neck flexor muscle exercise, both with the eyes open and eyes closed. The neck exercise was done to the point of fatigue in order to evaluate posture and balance, among other variables, in neck pain vs. non-neck-pain individuals.

Writing in *Spine Journal*, the researchers concluded: "[Chronic neck pain] causes poor postural control and altered neck muscle control patterns. The addition of neck flexor muscle fatigue further decreases balance stability and provokes a protective neck muscle control strategy during the shoulder flexion movement. Those findings ... suggest that neck endurance training programs may be beneficial to improve whole postural control in patients with [chronic neck pain]."

neck pain - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark And that's where your chiropractor comes in. When we talk about neck pain, posture and balance, your doctor is an expert not only in relieving the pain, but also finding and addressing the underlying cause, which will undoubtedly benefit your posture. In fact, your pain may be caused by a posture issue first, which according to this study, then creates even more posture problems – a repeating cycle, if you will.

Often, your chiropractor will find that your neck pain is actually caused by a spinal issue; and that by adjusting the spine and related areas, as well as teaching you postural exercises (and neck endurance exercises, as the authors suggest), your pain, posture problems and balance issues will all go away. Now that's a win-win-win for your health and wellness! Talk to your doctor for more information.

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