

[IMAGE]

Smartphones Aren't Smart for Your Neck

By Editorial Staff

Ample evidence suggests smartphone use promotes forward flexion of the neck, rounding of the shoulders and overall poor posture; what some have labeled "text neck" or "tech neck." But how bad is it? New research links excessive smartphone use with chronic neck pain leading to cervical disc degeneration, even at an earlier-than-normal age. (As you get older, spinal discs naturally begin to break down or "degenerate.")

Nearly 2,500 young patients suffering from chronic neck pain received magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) of the cervical spine. The Cervical Disc Degeneration Scale was utilized to assess degree of disc degeneration, while smartphone use was assessed by way of the Smartphone Addiction Scale, which determines smartphone use / overuse based on self-reporting (1-7 scale on various statements). Statements included in the addiction scale included, "Feeling tired and lacking adequate sleep due to excessive smartphone use," "Bringing my smartphone to the toilet even when I am in a hurry to get there," "My life would be empty without my smartphone," "The people around me tell me that I use my smartphone too much," and others.

smartphone - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Overall, more than half (52.9 percent) of patients were categorized as smartphone overusers. Those patients had cervical disc degeneration scores than patients who did not use their smartphones excessively according to addiction scale scores.

Neck pain can be bad, even in the short term. When it becomes chronic, it's even worse. And if it leads to disc degeneration while you're still young; well, you don't want that to happen. Talk to your doctor about your smartphone use and how to limit it before it's too late. If you're already suffering from neck pain, your doctor can help you treat it and address your smartphone "addiction" before your pain turns into something far worse.

Page printed from:

http://www.toyourhealth.com/mpacms/tyh/article.php?id=2749&no_paginate=true&no_b=true