

Fast Facts

Neck Pain

- Very common problem that many people experience
- Neck is designed to support the weight of your head while remaining flexible, which makes it vulnerable to injuries and disorders that result in pain and can limit movement
- Most common reasons for neck pain are muscle strain from overuse, injury, certain conditions, and aging
- Most mild to moderate neck pain is able to be treated at home and will go away in two to three weeks

<i>Symptoms</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Prevention</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Muscle tightness/spasms -Decreased ability to move your head -Headache -Pain that gets worse if you hold your head in one place for long periods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Apply a cold pack for 20 minutes at a time, several times a day, which you can alternate with heat from a warm shower or a heating pad on a low setting -Take over-the-counter pain relievers, like ibuprofen, naproxen, or acetaminophen -Perform gentle stretching exercises every day once worst of pain is gone <i>If you're not getting any relief:</i> -Doctor can prescribe a stronger medicine -Also recommend physical therapy, like transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) or traction <i>Other options:</i> -Immobilization in soft collar -Injection of steroids into the nerve roots, in the small facet joints in the bones in your neck or in the muscles in your neck -Alternative medicine approaches, like acupuncture, chiropractic care or massage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Have good posture when sitting or standing by making sure your shoulders are in a straight line over your hips and your ears are centered over your shoulders -Adjust desk, chair and computer so that the monitor is at eye level and your knees are slightly lower than your hips -Use a headset or speakerphone when using the phone -Take frequent breaks to get up and move around -Don't carry heavy bags on your shoulders -Make sure your head and neck are aligned with your body when you sleep by placing a small pillow under your neck and trying to sleep on your back with your thighs elevated on pillows -Don't smoke

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