

Neck Assessment

NAME:

The neck and upper shoulder assessment gives you an understanding if your neck and upper shoulder posture, range of motion, and movement are within normal limits and if they could affect neck health. Use these tests, strategies, and techniques to determine a course of action on how to protect your neck.

One of the most common acquired postural deviations is forward head posture (Text Neck). This position is characterized by forward positioning of the head relative to the shoulders, roundness of the shoulders, and increased neck extension to maintain an upright posture. It may result from injury, but is most commonly caused by overuse at poorly designed workstations, athletic and fitness training imbalances and errors, wrongly using personal devices, and poor postural mechanics (slouching).

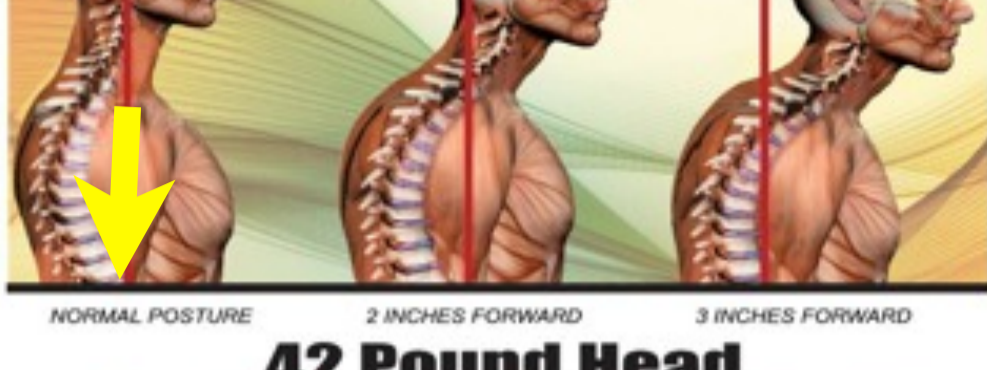
The Following may result from Forward Head and Rounded Shoulder Posture Occipital and frontal headaches. Nocturnal bruxism temporomandibular joint degeneration. Compromised diaphragmatic breathing Inefficient and labored breathing Thoracic outlet type symptoms. Degenerative Joint disease from C5 to C7 Palpable trigger points. Overtime a "dowager's hump" may develop resulting in lumbar hypermobility and possible disc strain. In other cases rotator cuff tendonitis may develop.



1) Posture and Neck Health - Do you have good neck posture? It is essential for neck and shoulder health.

Do you have excessive neck curvature? A slight curvature is normal but it should not be excessive. Is your head straight or is it extended forward? Correct posture is an imaginary almost straight line from the ear through the shoulder, hip, knee, and ankle joints. Your head should sit on top of your shoulders. In other words a vertical line should be present from your tip of your shoulder to the opening of your ear. Is your upper back rounded? Look at your arms as they hang by your side. Are they on the lateral aspect of your leg or do they come forward to the front of your leg making you appear like you have an ape like posture (roundness, increased kyphotic posture).

How Heavy is Your Head?

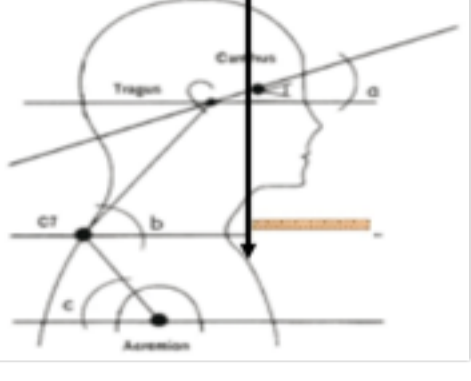


42 Pound Head

"For every inch of Forward Head Posture, it can increase the weight of the head on the spine by an additional 10 pounds."

Head Posture

Session 1	Session 2
Date: _____	Date: _____
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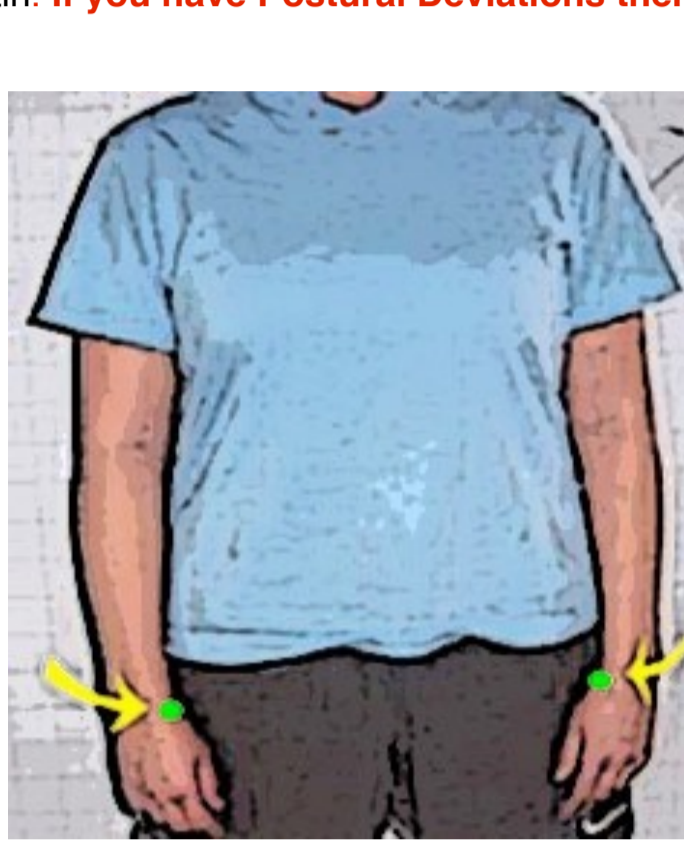


Where are you in terms of Head Posture (see arrow)?

1) Posture and Shoulder Health - Do you have good shoulder posture? It is essential for neck and shoulder health.

Look at your arms as they hang by your side. Are they on the lateral aspect of your leg or do they come forward to the front of your leg making you appear like you have an ape like posture (roundness, increased kyphotic posture). Many bodybuilders and weightlifters have this posture. Rounded shoulder posture increases your chances of rotator cuff issues and upper back and shoulder pain. **If you have Postural Deviations there are strategies and exercises to correct them.**

Shoulder Posture



Session 1	Session 2
Date: _____	Date: _____
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Where are you in terms of Shoulder Posture (see fingers)?

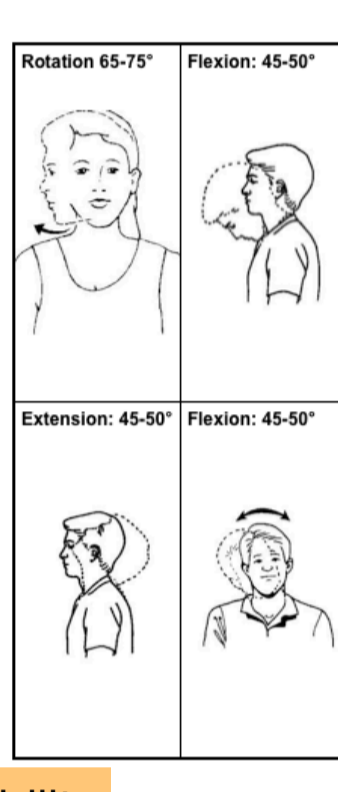
2) Flexibility and Neck Health

Being overly flexible or overly tight is not beneficial for spine health. An adequate (normal) and balanced (ie. symmetry: side vs side / right vs left) amount of flexibility is preferred. Tests: **All motion should be without compensation or catching and should be pain free. Pain could be a sign of dysfunction. If you have pain seek medical consultation. Perform tests slowly.** *Loss of low back range of motion might be an early indicator of developing osteoarthritis, especially if pain is present.

Neck range of motion

Rotation: Look to your right and then your left. Was it the same or was one side easier to move? You should be able to see your shoulder tip at end of each rotation. Normal 65-75 degrees.

If you have Tight Areas there are stretches to lengthen them. See Stretch Program.



Extension and Flexion: Extension: Try bringing your head to where your looking at the ceiling. If you were below a light you should be able to look up and see the light. Normal 45-50 degrees.

Flexion: Bring your head to where your looking at the floor. You should be able to see your toes. Normal 45-50 degrees.

Lateral Flexion: Try bringing your ear to your shoulders and then repeat on other side. You should be able to touch your ear to shoulder by shrugging the same side shoulder. Normal 45 degrees.

Neck Flexibility

	Date:	Date:
Rotation Right 65-75°	Normal	-----
Rotation Left 65-75°	Normal	-----
Extension 45-50°	Normal	-----
Flexion 45-50°	Normal	-----
Lateral flexion right 45°	Normal	-----
Lateral flexion left 45°	Normal	-----

3) Movement and Neck Health

How we lift objects, use our computers and mobile devices, and breathe can impact our neck and overall health.

Demonstrate how you sit at a workstation.

Where is your eye level? Raise your monitor so that the top third of your screen is at eye-level. **What was your angle of monitor?**



How far away is your monitor? Measure the distance from your monitor to your eyes to ensure it is 18 to 24 inches away from your face. **What was your distance of monitor?**

Do you use arm rests? **Yes or No** Use armrests when working at a desk is a must. Also, use a headset when using a phone for a long period of time.



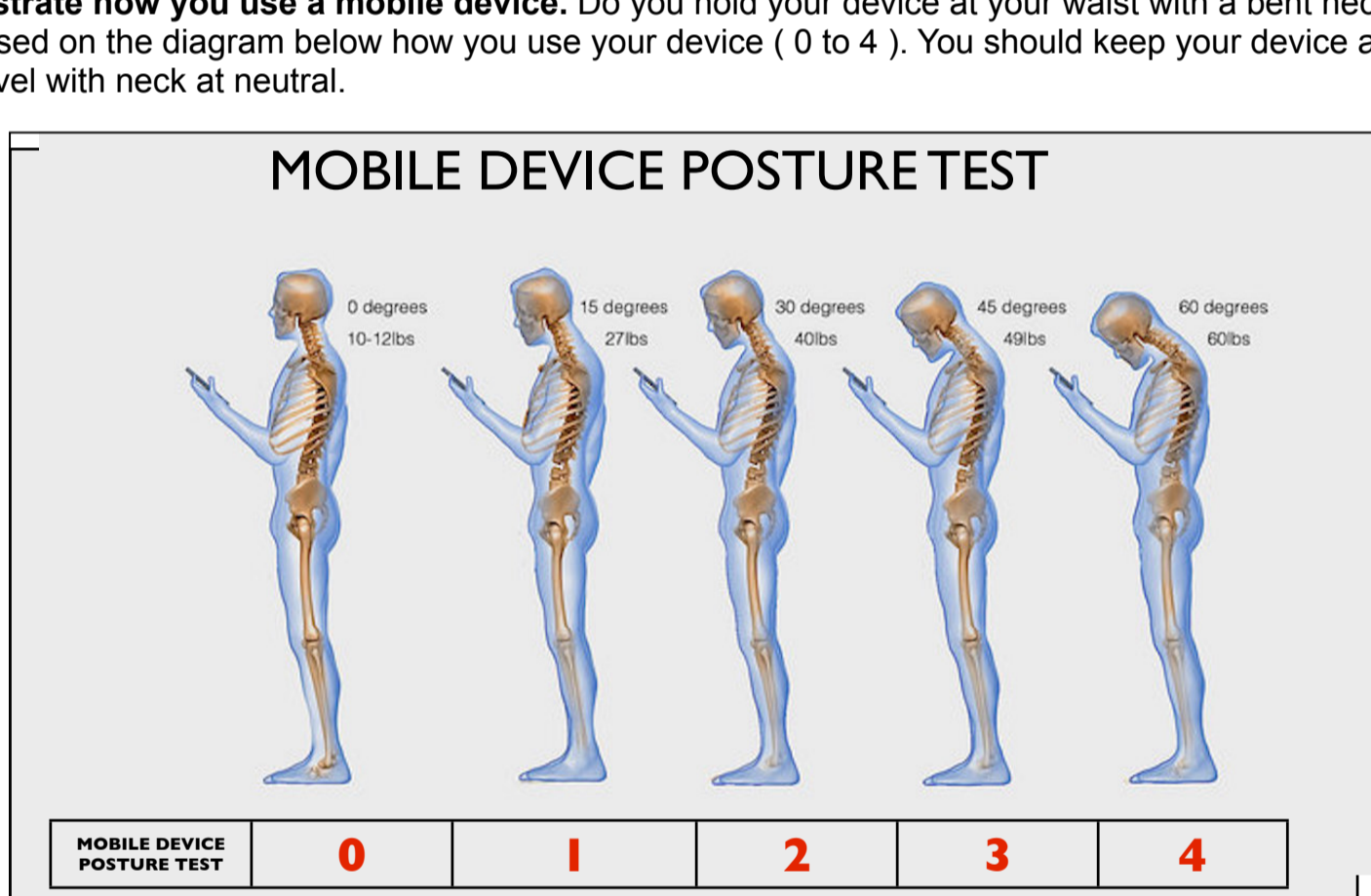
Do your shoulders (trapezius) elevate when you do a row motion? **Yes or No**

If your shoulders (trapezius) elevate when performing a row exercise it could be a sign that your upper trapezius are overly dominant. Upper trapezius dominance may lead to forward head posture, trigger point formation, and neck pain.

Do you sleep on your side, back, or front? The position that you sleep at night places may place a great deal of strain on your neck. While sleeping on your back make sure that your head remains in a neutral position where there is a natural curve. The top of your head should not be higher than your chin it should be in the same plane. While sleeping on your side make sure your head and neck remain in the same plane; in other words do not sleep with your head bent. Do not sleep on your stomach it keeps the neck in a twisted position all night. **How do you sleep? Back, Side, or Front.**



Demonstrate how you use a mobile device. Do you hold your device at your waist with a bent neck? Rate based on the diagram below how you use your device (0 to 4). You should keep your device at chest level with neck at neutral.



Mobile Device Posture

Session 1	Session 2
Date: _____	Date: _____
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Measure of breathing pattern Studies have suggested that poor posture and improper breathing use may negatively impact breathing pattern and rate. This is problematic since breathing is a gateway to our autonomic nervous system, which controls the fight or flight and relaxation responses. If you learn how to breathe from the diaphragm you can help your body get a more restorative breath and instill a relaxation response. A great way to learn how you breathe is through the Hi Lo Test, which is an easy to use assessment of breathing pattern and rate. Place one hand on their sternum and one hand on their upper abdomen. As you breathe do you feel more chest movement? Do you feel more abdomen movement? what moves first the chest or the abdomen? Ideally the hand on the abdomen should move first before the hand on the upper chest and the hands should move horizontally where there is mostly motion from the abdomen. The flow of air should go from the abdomen up without any shoulder movement. A normal breathing rate is 12-16 breathes per minute, above this range is faulty, shallow breathing.



Session 1	Session 2
Date: _____	Date: _____
Breathing Pattern	Breathing Pattern
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Breathing Rate	Breathing Rate
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Answer these questions to understand where you are at.

Do you display diaphragmatic or faulty (chest/thoracic) breathing? _____

What was your breathing rate? _____

Faulty breathers typically have higher levels of stress and anxiety and more frequent headaches? _____

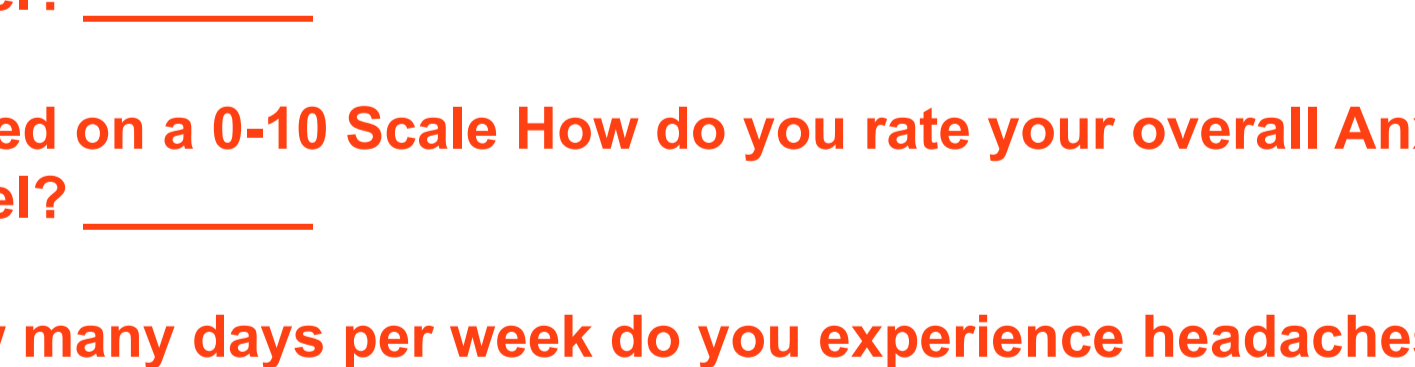
Based on a 0-10 Scale How do you rate your overall Stress Level? _____

Based on a 0-10 Scale How do you rate your overall Anxiety Level? _____

How many days per week do you experience headaches? _____

What is your Headache Intensity Level when you do? _____

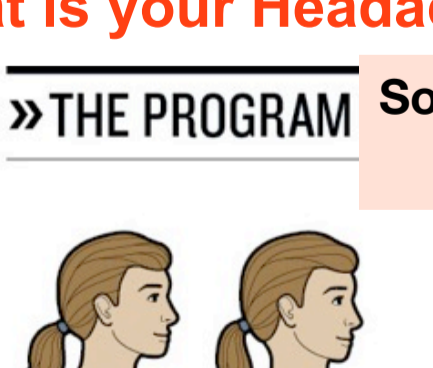
»THE PROGRAM Solution to Neck Pain: This is a safe and proven program to help reduce neck pain. Stop if you have pain



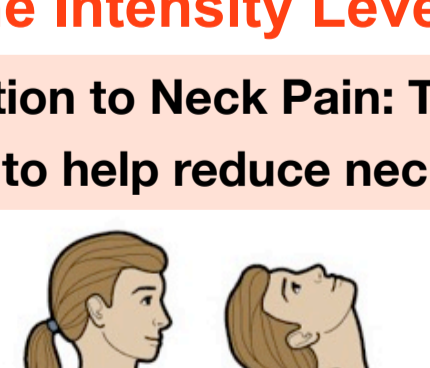
Neck Retraction
While lying faceup or sitting down, bring head straight back, keeping your eyes on the horizon. Then return to neutral. Repeat 10 times.

Head Drop
Starting in a seated position, retract neck (as above). Slowly move head up and backward as far as you can comfortably go. Return to neutral. Repeat 10 times. Do this exercise again at the end of each session (so you do it twice each session).

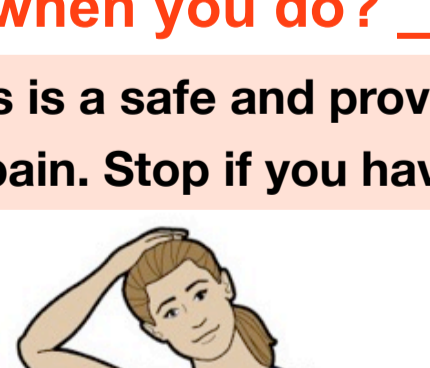
Side Bend
Sit down, bring head into neck-retraction position, then gently guide right ear toward right shoulder with right hand. Stop when you feel a stretch on left side of neck. Return to neutral. Repeat 5 times on each side.



Rotation
While sitting, bring head into neck-retraction position, then gently turn head diagonally to the right so your nose is over your shoulder. Return to neutral. Repeat 5 times in each direction (left and right).



Flexion
Sitting down, bring head into neck-retraction position. Clasp hands behind head and gently guide head down, bringing chin toward chest. Stop when you feel a stretch in the back of your neck. Return to neutral. Repeat 5 times.



Shoulder Blade Pull
While sitting, bend raised arms at 90-degree angles. Relax shoulders and neck. Keeping arms and neck still, squeeze the muscles between shoulder blades, drawing shoulder blades closer together. Return to neutral. Repeat 5 times.

Solution to Neck Pain and Stress-Practice Diaphragmatic Breathing Daily

Diaphragmatic breathing, or deep breathing from the diaphragm rather than the chest, is a great way to relax and reduce anxiety.

How to practice diaphragmatic breathing

1. Find a quiet place free of distractions. Lie on the floor or recline in a chair, loosen any tight clothing and remove glasses or contacts. Rest your hands in your lap or on the arms of the chair.

2. Place one hand on your upper chest and the other hand on your stomach. Inhale, taking a deep breath from your abdomen as you count to three. As you inhale you should feel your stomach rise up. The hand on your chest should not move.

3. After a short pause of a 2 count, slowly exhale while counting to six.

4. Your stomach should fall back down as you exhale.

5. Continue this pattern of rhythmic breathing for five to ten minutes.

Revised by C. Morin from McMaster University. Guided Relaxation CD.

Name		Name	
Date		Date	
FHP Yes or No		FHP Yes or No	
FHP inches		FHP inches	
RSP Yes or No		RSP Yes or No	
Fingers		Fingers	
Rotation Right 65–75°		Rotation Right 65–75°	
Rotation Left 65–75°		Rotation Left 65–75°	
Extension 45–50°		Extension 45–50°	
Flexion 45–50°		Flexion 45–50°	
Lateral flexion right 45°		Lateral flexion right 45°	
Lateral flexion left 45°		Lateral flexion left 45°	
MDPT		MDPT	
Breathing Pattern		Breathing Pattern	
Breathing Rate		Breathing Rate	