ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Orthopaedics

TEXT NECK SYNDROME A GROWING EPIDEMIC AMONG SMART PHONE USERS.

KEY WORDS: Text Neck Syndrome

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ABSTRACT

Text Neck is an overuse syndrome or a repetitive stress injury to the neck caused by holding your head in a forward and downward position for extended periods of time. This causes excessive amounts of tension in the deep muscles of your neck and across the shoulders resulting in acute and chronic neck pain. A Descriptive study design was used to assess the risk of text neck syndrome among 80 smartphone users. Non probability purposive sampling was used to select the sample. The findings of the study revealed about 8.75% were at mild, 67.50% were at moderate risk and 23.75% were at severe risk for text neck syndrome. The common risk prone behaviours adopted were prolonged use of smart Phone (46.25%), (28.75%) hold phone below eyelevel, (37.50%) do not take breaks. While technology can add convenience to our lives, excessive use of smart phone can increase the risk of developing TNS.

INTRODUCTION:

Mobile phones are now generally seen as being essential to our daily lives, with texting the most common way of communication. Global System of Mobile Association (GSMA) estimates that two-thirds of the world's population possess a mobile phone. In January 2018, at least 68 per cent of the world's population had access to a device. That number is expected to reach 75 per cent by 2020.[1]

"Text Neck is an overuse syndrome or a repetitive stress injury to the neck caused by holding your head in a forward and downward position for extended periods of time. When holding your head in this position, excessive amounts of tension are created in the deep muscles of your neck and across the shoulders causing both acute and chronic neck pain. A recent systematic review done in Honk Kong suggests that prevalence of musculoskeletal problems with mobile phone usage are high ranging from 17.3% to 67.8% for neck complaints.[2]

AIM:

To identify risk of text neck syndrome among smartphone users with a view to develop Text Neck Syndrome Prevention Bundle for smart phone users.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To identify risk of text neck syndrome among smartphone users.
2. To develop Text Neck Syndrome Prevention Bundle for smart phone users.

METHODOLOGY:

A Descriptive - Survey design was used to assess the risk of text neck syndrome among 80 smart phone users of selected community using self-administered structured questionnaire. Non probability purposive sampling was used to select the sample. Descriptive statistics was conducted to evaluate the responses obtained from the subjects.

Results:

Majority of sample 76% reported Smart phone usage (4-6hrs) per day, 24% reported 6-8 hrs and 10% reported smart phone usage 2-4hrs per day. A study done in Korea mentions a positive relationship between hours of mobile phone use and subjective musculoskeletal problems. When smart phones are constantly used without any rest, and a poor posture is maintained over a long period of time, musculoskeletal pain can occur.[3] About 8.75% were at mild, 67.50% were at moderate risk and 23.75% were at severe risk for text neck syndrome. The common risk prone behaviours adopted by smart phone users were prolonged use of smart Phone (46.25%), (28.75%) reported that they do not hold smart phone at eyelevel, 37.50% reported that they do not take breaks.

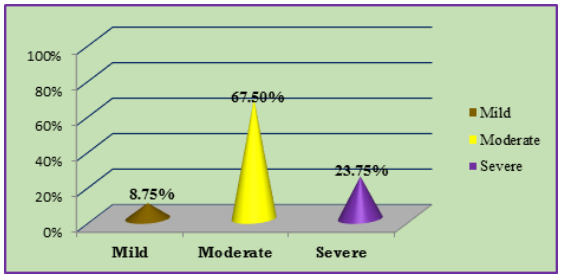

Fig1.1 Risk of Text Neck Syndrome among smart phone user

Text Neck Prevention bundle was prepared based on the literature review and practices adopted by Smart phone users.

TEXT NECK SYNDROME PREVENTION BUNDLE

- Take frequent breaks:20-20-20 rule, every 20 minutes take a 20 second break and focus the eyes on something at least 20 feet away then look up and bring the neck back into the neutral position.
- Eye Level: Hold the smart phone at Eyelevel.
- EXERCISE: posture-focused exercises: neck stretches moving up and down & in clockwise and Anti clockwise direction
- TIMER: Set a timer, walk around and switch on to other task that does not require SMART Phone/tablet/computer after every 30 mins.

CONCLUSION:

The present study states that majority of subjects were at moderate risk for TNS, hence there is a growing need to create awareness about TNS. The researcher also created a Text neck Syndrome prevention bundle, simple strategies which when practiced regularly will reduce the risk of smart phone related complication as an ounce of prevention is better than pounds of care.

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