



Next Step Newsletter

Next Step
Physical Therapy
(516) 681- 8070

May, 2008

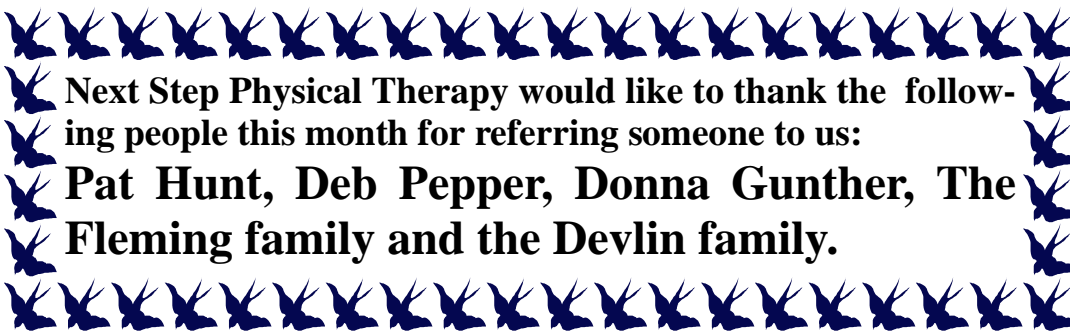
Giving you information and answers to any physical therapy, health or fitness related questions

Don't stick your neck out on the line!

Neck pain is an extremely common problem. The interesting fact is that most neck problems are not related to an injury but more so to bad posture. We've all experienced the feeling of a tired neck after staying on the computer too long or reading the newspaper. That tired feeling is precisely that—your neck muscles are tired from holding your head up for an extended amount of time. Of all the muscles in our body, when we think of neck muscles, the words strong and powerful don't come to mind. Look at them—they're small and delicate and not supposed to do much heavy lifting. Now let's look at the load that the neck has to lift, your head. Your head is pretty heavy, after all it does hold your brain (I hope your head is heavy). Ultimately the problem is that we have small muscles holding up a heavy item, for some people all day. When you lay down, your neck doesn't have to hold your head up.

Where does posture come in, you ask? Based on gravity and physics, the further your head moves forward, past your shoulders and chest, the greater the force your neck muscles have to generate to hold it up. Try this and you'll see. First stand up. Then slowly jut your head and chin forward as far as you can and hold that position. Can you feel your neck muscles starting to work? Now pull your head back towards your body and push your shoulders back, sticking out your chest. Do you feel how the neck muscles relax or don't have to work nearly as hard? That's because your head is now lined up over your body and the spine can support more of your head's weight, allowing the muscles to not have to work so hard.

Now imagine some poor fellow who looks at a computer screen for eight hours a day with his head too far forward so he can see the computer screen better. Do that every day for many years and you can imagine why this person can develop neck pain. It's not just computers that are causing the problem, it can be any activity (reading, watching TV, talking to someone across a table) that causes you to have a "forward head" posture that can result in neck pain.

 **Next Step Physical Therapy would like to thank the following people this month for referring someone to us:**
Pat Hunt, Deb Pepper, Donna Gunther, The Fleming family and the Devlin family.

I need some housing help!

Next Step Physical Therapy is very excited to become a learning center for physical therapy students. Our first student will be coming soon all the way from St Louis. We hope to have 2-3 students each year at different times for a few months at a time. The physical therapy schools have all mentioned that a lack of housing options for the students makes coming to New York difficult. What I'm asking is that if anyone has either an apartment or an extra room with a bathroom and would like to make a little bit of money and help a doctoral student out, please let me know. When I did my residencies like these students, I stayed with a family in Indiana and my wife had a wonderful time sharing a house with an older lady from Georgia who had extra space. Please call us if you are interested or if you know someone who is and we can give you more details.

Updates

Welcome to the Next Step Newsletter!

Win a pair of movie tickets!!

The first 2 people to call us with the answer to this question wins a pair of movie tickets.

True or false— Jutting your head forward will allow your neck muscles to relax when they feel tired????

- If you have a friend or family member that you think could use our help please let us know or have them call us.
- If you would like more information on any of the topics discussed here please give us a call.
- If you have a question that you would like to have answered (maybe in the next newsletter) please don't hesitate to call.
- What topics are you interested in and would like to see in the newsletter? Let us know.

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