

## **Problems with the Work Station**

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*By Dr. Derek Conte*

So many times in my practice I encounter people with the following description: Head leaning forward, tilted and rotated, shoulders rounded, chest a bit sunken, arms and hands rolled in and the hips tucked under. The complaints with these patients usually go like this: Neck pain and stiffness, headaches, upper back pain, radiating pain, numbness and tingling to the arms, hands and fingers and also weakness of the hands. Upon examination we see, aside from the aforementioned postural distortion, significant weight imbalance when tested with two scales simultaneously, very tight front neck and chest muscles, and weak muscles in the back of the neck and back.

This may sound complex but it is very familiar. Posture, good or bad, is caused by habit and the result of the activities and work we do. In this case the patients usually sit slumped at a computer terminal all day long. When we do an analysis of their position we find the monitor is too low, the keyboard is too high and far away and the seat is too low and offers little or no support to the low back. This causes the entire spine to break down into a "C"- shape. It is as if they are wrapping themselves around a big beach ball that isn't there --- an incredibly stressful position that can produce all of the postural problems and symptoms with which they present! By merely changing the workstation significant improvements can be realized.

A chiropractor's work with these patients might consist of specific chiropractic adjustments to correct the misalignments of the spine, stretching the tight muscles, exercising the weak muscles and rearranging of the workstation so it conforms to the natural shape and movements of the human body. In my experience, these patients have 90-100% improvement of symptoms, enjoy frequent compliments from friends and family regarding their "new" posture and learn a great deal about their health and their bodies in the process.

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