

THE HIDDEN CULPRIT: MULTIFOCALS & NECK PAIN

PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR HEAD POSTURE WHILE USING MULTIFOCAL GLASSES.

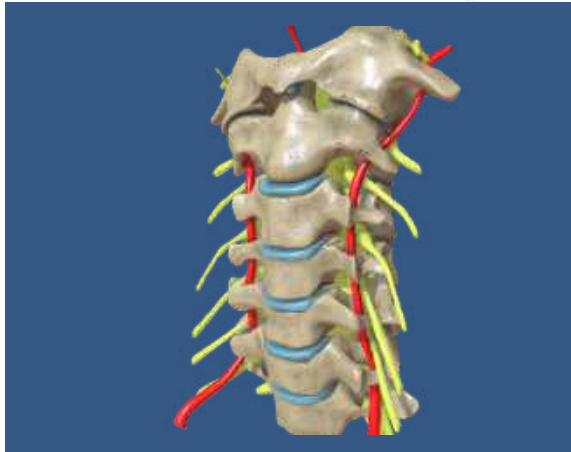
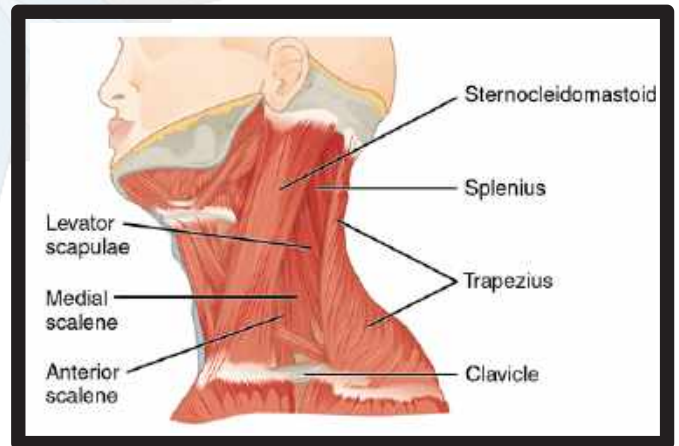


If you wear multifocal glasses, you're probably familiar with the convenience they offer. These lenses allow you to see clearly at different distances, making them a popular choice for those with presbyopia. However, did you know that multifocal glasses may also contribute to persistent neck pain.

UNDERSTANDING MULTIFOCAL GLASSES.

Multifocal glasses are designed to correct vision at various distances. They consist of multiple prescription strengths within a single lens. The upper part of the lens is for distance vision, the middle part is for intermediate vision (such as using a computer), and the lower part is for close-up tasks like reading. However the design of near-vision lenses could in fact contribute to the development cervical dysfunction and consequently neck pain.

Clinical experience and research-based evidence is demonstrating that, combined with increased computer and personal mobile screen use, multifocal lenses are contributing to an increase in upper cervical postural dysfunction and computer-related neck pain.



CERVICAL ANATOMY

There are 7 vertebrae in the neck with discs separating and bilateral facet joints each side. These facet joints are important for the direction and limitations of neck movement. The natural postural positioning of the neck is of a gentle C curve. The lumbar spine also has a C curve or lordosis

THE NECK PAIN CONNECTION

Neck pain associated with multifocal glasses typically stems from the need to tilt your head at unnatural angles to find the right focal point, generally extension.

One study using xrays and digital software has demonstrated the higher extension angles of the individual vertebra when wearing multifocals compared to unifocal or single focus glasses when using a computer.

HERE'S HOW IT HAPPENS

The areas for you to use during PC work are placed in the lower third of the progressive lens. If you want to be able to use this area you either need to look down on a laptop or you need to lift up your chin and hold this position for an extended amount of time to see a desk top monitor clearly. This can be even worse if you have multiple screens and need to rotate and tilt back at the same time.

Constant Head Movement: When you switch your gaze between distant objects and something up close, your eyes need to adjust. This necessitates repeatedly tilting your head back to align the appropriate part of the multifocal lens with your line of sight.

Prolonged Use: If you spend long hours reading or working on close-up tasks, this strained posture into extension can become chronic, leading to persistent neck pain.

Muscle fatigue. Sitting at a computer for long periods can lead to muscle fatigue. The normal lordosis of the lumbar spine is then reduced, shifting the body weight and centre of gravity backwards. This is counter acted by dropping the shoulders forwards and 'poking' of the chin. In the cervical spine, this posture increases extension in the upper part of the neck compounding the effect of multifocal position adjusting. This increases the pressure on the facet joints and over time can result in stiffness and pain. With constant use, some key postural muscles get longer and weaker and others get shorter and tighter

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Computer related neck pain is a chronic condition that arises gradually, becoming more persistent and difficult to manage without help. Initially, pain and discomfort are intermittent, with onset generally later in the day or evening and tightness in different neck muscles. Gradually the pain can be during the day and unrelenting. Pain may extend into the upper shoulders (trapezius muscle) or in between the shoulder blades.



ALLEVIATING NECK PAIN FROM MULTIFOCAL GLASSES

Here are some strategies to consider:

An **Ergonomic assessment** of your workstation. These can be done by our Physio's. Or request our Our Corporate [WORK STATION CHECK LIST HERE](#). Updating and adjusting your workspace can have an immediate impact on symptoms and improve productivity and pain.

Consult a Physio. Local manual therapy to the irritated joints, dry needling, ultrasound, massage and release techniques of the altered soft tissues, with correct postural advice and education can assist greatly with symptom management.

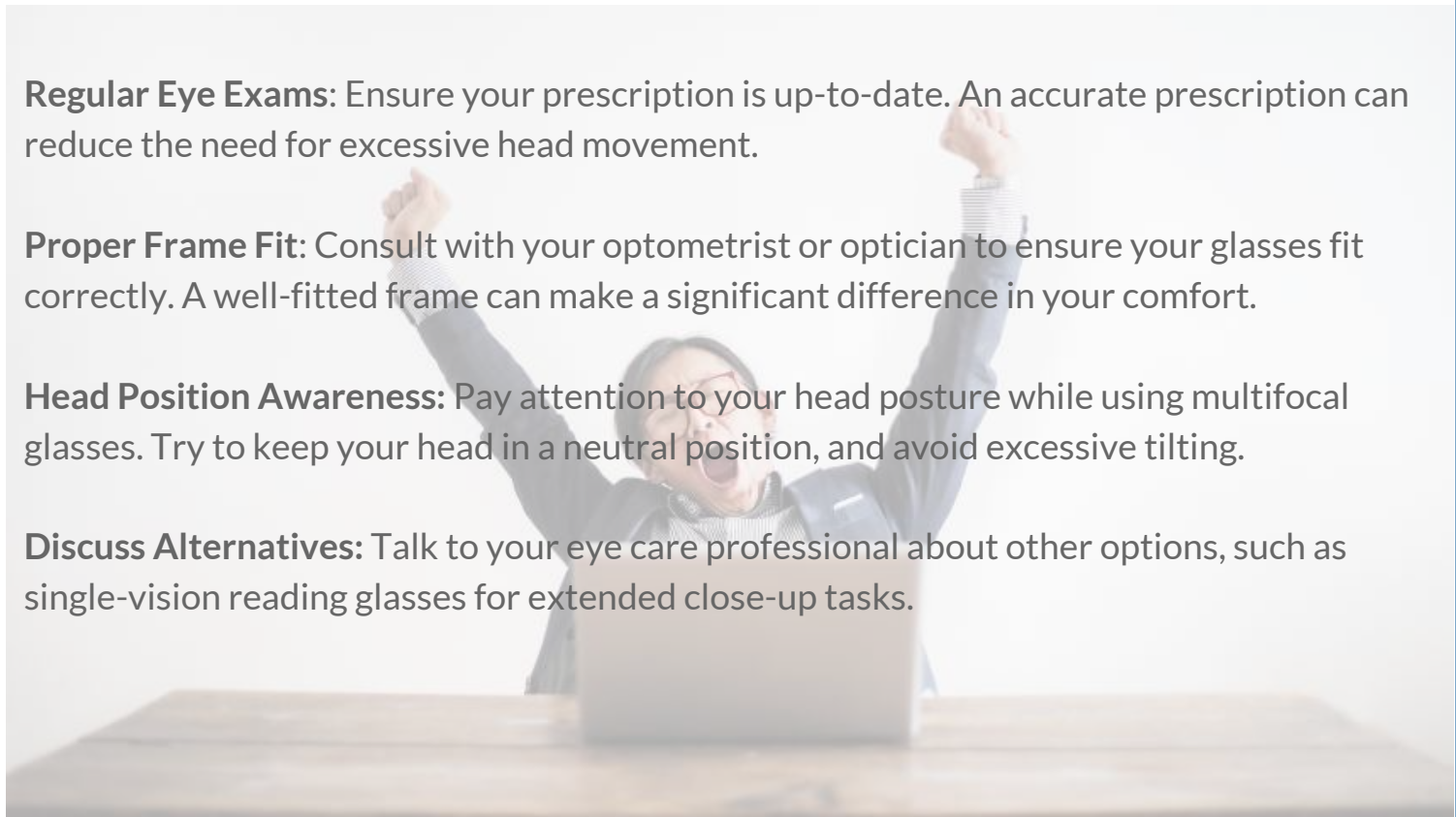
Exercise prescription. Addressing any muscle imbalances and restoring normal posture is the key to long term improvement. Looking at the deep neck flexors, scapula stabilisers and general core stability to help reduce the forward head posture and improve stability. Incorporate neck stretches and strengthening exercises into your daily routine to mitigate muscle strain.

Regular Eye Exams: Ensure your prescription is up-to-date. An accurate prescription can reduce the need for excessive head movement.

Proper Frame Fit: Consult with your optometrist or optician to ensure your glasses fit correctly. A well-fitted frame can make a significant difference in your comfort.

Head Position Awareness: Pay attention to your head posture while using multifocal glasses. Try to keep your head in a neutral position, and avoid excessive tilting.

Discuss Alternatives: Talk to your eye care professional about other options, such as single-vision reading glasses for extended close-up tasks.



IN CONCLUSION

Computer related neck pain is a common presentation, aggravated by the increased usage of multifocal lenses and increased prevalence of hand held devices. Acute symptoms of pain and stiffness respond well to Physiotherapy, while exercise prescription is needed for important long term control.

If you continue to experience neck pain, consult with one of our physiotherapists for personalised advice and exercises to address the issue.

At Hindmarsh Physiotherapy, we understand the importance of holistic health and well-being. If you have any questions or concerns about neck pain or any other health-related matters, don't hesitate to get in touch.



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Don't let persistent pain interfere with your work, study, sport and lifestyle. See one of our caring physios to help relieve your symptoms to move and feel better.

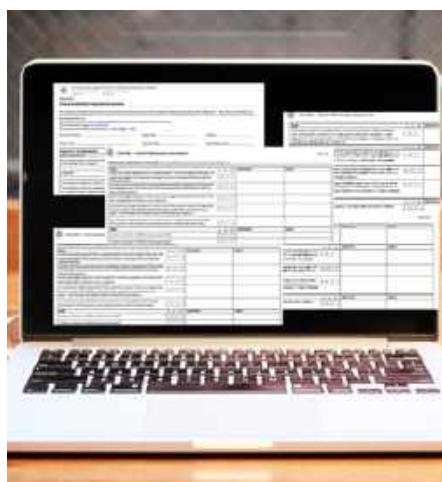
Call us on 83462000 or email us below for an appointment.

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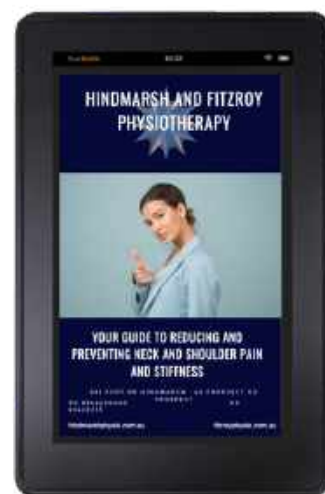
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BACK PAIN**



**WORK STATION
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**MANAGING
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