Is Your Tablet/Smart Phone a Pain in the Neck?

The cumulative effect of smartphone and tablet use both on campus and at home may increase the risk of chronic neck injuries and repetitive stress injuries in the fingers.

DID YOU KNOW?
The effects of long term forward neck posture leads to "long term muscle strain, disc herniations and pinched nerves." Mayo Clinic Health Letter Vol. 18, #3 March 2000

Forward head posture results in loss of vital capacity of the lungs by as much as 30%. This shortness of breath can lead to heart and blood vascular disease. The entire gastrointestinal system is affected; particularly the large intestine. Loss of good bowel peristaltic function and evacuation is a common effect of FHP. -Rene Cailliet, M.D., Director of the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the University of Southern California


BEST PRACTICES:
- Hold your mobile device at eye level
- Alternate hands you use to hold your mobile device
- Use voice dictation (Siri, Cortera, etc.)
- Consider use of a tablet holder if using it for an extended period of time
- Consider use of a stylus pen
- Use your desktop computer to reply to e-mails and browse the internet

For additional support, contact SU Ergonomics at ergonomics@lists.stanford.edu
To avoid glare, position the laptop screen perpendicular to windows. Shut blinds to avoid bright outside light & avoid working under bright lights.

Place laptop on a riser (or use a separate monitor) so the top of the screen is at/slightly below eye level.

Use separate input devices (e.g. keyboard, mouse) to allow the shoulders to relax and the hands to be at elbow level.

Maintain neutral wrists while typing. Reduce contact stress by floating the hands above the keyboard.

Breaks: Take a 1-2 minute microbreak every 30 mins. Free break software is available for PC (WorkRave) and Mac (TimeOut).

Use an adjustable chair. Sit with hips/knees/ankles at 90° and feet flat on the ground.

Use a backpack with two straps to distribute the weight or a rolling bag.

Complete the web-based computer workstation ergonomics training (EHS 3400 – available through STARS).

For additional support, contact SU Ergonomics at ergonomics@lists.stanford.edu