Heart AND Hand CHIROPRACTIC

THE CLEAR SIGNAL LIVE

November 10, 2026

Tech Neck

Why the Way You Hold Your Head Changes the Load on Your Neck

Dr. Ryan Pilsner, DC · Heart & Hand Chiropractic

An adult head weighs about 10 to 12 pounds. Held over your shoulders, your neck can share that load. Held forward, the lever gets longer, and the same muscles have to work much harder.

If you had to hold a 10 to 12 pound medicine ball all day, you would last longer with your wrist over your elbow than with the ball a couple of inches out in front. The ball did not get heavier. The lever got longer.

Computer modeling has been used to estimate what happens when the head tips forward. Around 15 degrees is in the neighborhood of 27 pounds of force on the neck. Around 60 degrees is more like 60 pounds. You do not have to be staring at your belt for this to add up.

Try this: pick up your phone the way you normally would. Is your head straight ahead, or is the phone down by your belly button? A lot of people I see are closer to 45 degrees, and some are closer to 60.

Three things you can start now

1. **Raise the screen.**
   Phone, computer, iPad, even a book. Prop it on a pillow or a stand so your eyes stay closer to level.

2. **Change position often.**
   Get up every 20 or 30 minutes, even for a couple of minutes. If you disappear into a project, set a timer. A little kitchen timer works.

3. **When you walk, leave the phone down.**
   A walk spent looking at a screen is still a long lever.

The FLIP exercise

A simple chin tuck, where you shift your head back, is okay for some people. It is not automatically the right move for every neck, especially if the curve of the neck has changed.

FLIP is a more advanced chin-tuck variation taught in this lesson. Only start it after you have been screened and cleared, or after you have checked with your chiropractor.

1. Slide your head up and forward.
2. Tip it back.
3. With it tipped back, slide it straight back.
4. Hold about 10 seconds.

In the research referenced in the lesson, people used a 10-second hold and three sets of 20. The 10-second hold is the key. No equipment is needed. Do not do this while driving.

Stop and check with your chiropractor first
if you have dizziness, arm numbness, a recent neck injury, Down syndrome, rheumatoid arthritis, known instability, a spinal fusion, or something else complicated in your neck. If you feel numbness, tingling, or weakness, stop. If you have questions, or something severe going on in your neck, get it checked before you continue.

A closer look

You cannot tell the curve of your own neck with much confidence from a photo or a mirror. If you want that closer look, we look first and let you decide.

Request a complimentary spinal screening
hnhchiro.com/chiropractic-new-patient-schedule
(970) 377-3557
260 E. Horsetooth Rd, Suite 101, Fort Collins, CO

Take a look at our upcoming workshop topics
hnhchiro.com/fort-collins-health-workshops

This is education, not a diagnosis and not a promise of a result.