



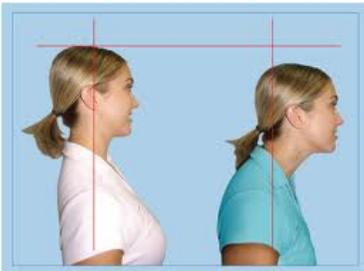
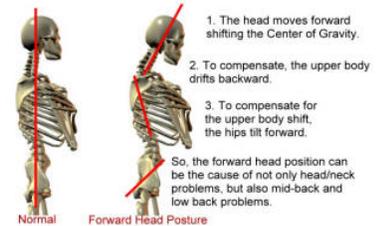
## What You Need To Know: Forward Head Posture

One of the most common postural problems is Forward Head Posture (FHP). We live in a forward facing world – the repetitive use of computers, TV, video games, certain work/leisure/exercise activities, trauma and even backpacks, all force the body to adapt to a forward head posture. It is the repetition of these activities, together with poor posture, that cause the body to adapt to a forward head posture.



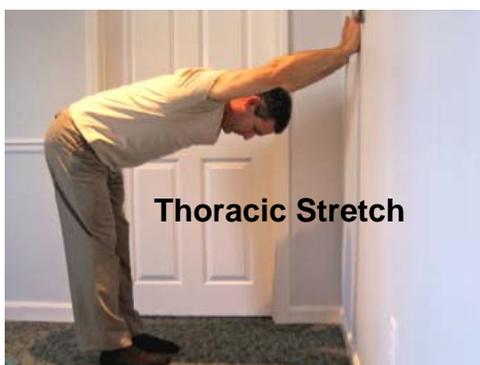
FHP has the potential to cause conditions such as muscle strain, disc herniations/compression, arthritis, and pinched nerves. FHP can also contribute to a decrease in respiratory muscle strength and loss of lung capacity. Other effects include organ dysfunction and a reduction of endorphins that may lead to an increased response to pain and discomfort and can impact mood. In addition, FHP can compete with brain activity taking energy away from daily activities to deal with abnormal gravity/posture relationships and processing.

### Dangers of Forward Head Posture The Domino Effect



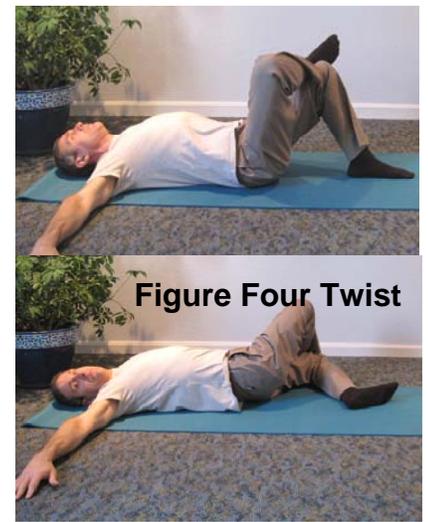
To counteract the effects of FHP, exercises designed to help realign the neck/spine are useful. Over a period of time, these exercises may change your head's position with respect to the shoulders and back. Do these exercises each day and notice the change that it makes. After two weeks, ask us to re-evaluate you in the office to measure your progress.

**Quadriceps Stretch:** Begin by stretching your quadriceps muscle. Balance yourself near a wall or chair. Take the ankle of one leg and gently pull it behind you. Keep your knees together, stand straight and hold for 30 seconds. Switch to the other side.



**Thoracic Stretch:** Stand facing a wall about one arm's distance away. Place your hands on the wall at the same height as your shoulder. Step back away from the wall and bend forward at your hips, keep your arms straight. Your heels should be directly under your hips. Place some of your weight into the balls of your feet and engage your quadriceps. Try to tip your pelvis down in front, creating an arch at the lowest point of your spine. Allow your chest and head to sink through your arms. Hold for one (1) minute.

**Figure Four Twist:** First, lie on your back with your knees bent as shown in the top picture, place your feet and knees shoulder width apart. Place your arms straight out at shoulder height. Cross your right leg over your left so that your legs resemble a #4. Keep your hips level (your belt line should be straight across). Press your right knee away from your body and twist your lower body over to the left as you turn your head and look right. Maintain the pressure, pressing your right knee away from your body but keep your right foot firmly on the floor. You should feel this in the outside of your right hip and/or in your lower back. Hold this position for one (1) minute each side.



**Upper Spinal Twist:** Lie on your side as if you were just sitting in a chair that tipped over as shown in the top picture. You should have 90-degree angles at your knees, hips and shoulders. Your spine should be long and straight. Your knees and hips should be stacked on top of one another. Begin this exercise feeling some weight on the outside edge of your shoulder, do not slide the shoulder on the floor forward. Reach the top arm back, twisting your torso away from your hips. Make sure you maintain a stacked position with your knees and hips. Hold this position for one (1) minute each side.

**Cat:** Place your hands directly under your shoulders and your knees directly under your hips. Tuck your tailbone, press the middle of your back up toward the ceiling, press your shoulder blades apart and tuck your chin as you exhale completely.



**Dog:** From the Cat position, lift your tail bone, arch your back, and squeeze your shoulder blades all the way into your spine and look up as your inhale completely. Repeat 10 times.

**Dragon:** Place your hands directly under your shoulders and your knees directly under your hips. Move your hands forward from this position about 3 inches. Shift your weight forward until your shoulders are directly over your wrists and your hips are about 6 inches in front of your knees. Allow your chest to sink toward the floor and your shoulder blades to collapse in toward your spine. Lift your tailbone arching your lower back and allow your head to hang down. Hold this position for two (2) minutes.

