Tech neck and how to avoid it

How much do we use our phones on average each day?

- Teens and young adults
  - 4 hours (240 minutes)
- Adults
  - 3 hours 49 minutes (229 minutes)

In 1 year, a young adult will spend 60 full days looking at their phone or tablet. An adult will spend 58.

What is this doing to our bodies?

Phones and tablets are handheld. This means that we often need to hang our heads forward to see the screens. The further forward the head hangs, the greater the pressure on the spine. This position puts a large amount of strain on joints, discs and muscles in the neck and back. If maintained for long periods of time, it can lead to:

- Upper back ache
- Sharp, severe upper back muscle spasms
- Shoulder pain
- Tightness
- Cervical nerve pinching pain
- Neurological symptoms radiating down arms and into hands

How can we reduce the risk of tech neck?

By changing our habits

- Short of throwing your phone into the sea and renouncing technology forever, try this:
  - Try these stretches:
    - Neck twist
      - Sit or stand upright
      - Without lifting chin, twist head to look over your shoulder
      - Hold for slow count of 10
      - Repeat 3-5 times
    - Neck tilt
      - Drop head slowly to one side, taking ear towards shoulder until stretch is felt
      - Hold for slow count of 10
      - Repeat 3-5 times
    - Shoulder stretch
      - Raise shoulders towards ears until slight tension felt across tops of shoulders
      - Hold for slow count of 10
      - Repeat 3-5 times
    - Shoulder roll
      - Sit with back supported
      - Slowly roll shoulders up and backwards in circular motion
      - Repeat 10 times

For every inch of forward head posture, it can increase the weight of the head on the spine by an additional 10 pounds. - Kapandji, Physiology of Joints, Vol 3.