**POSTURAL NECK PAIN**

**What is it?**

Postural neck pain is as it sounds. Poor posture and incorrect work ergonomic set-up can result in neck pain.

**Common signs and symptoms**

* Neck ache which may extend to the shoulders and shoulder blades
* Stiffness of neck movements
* Headaches
* Pain has gradual onset, worsening throughout day
* Aggravated by sitting, prolonged postures, repetitive work duties
* Eased with heat, movement, and pain medication

**What causes it?**

* Weak deep neck flexor, lower trapezius and other relevant muscles
* Increased lordosis of neck (chin poking out position)
* Forward head posture
* Rounded shoulders
* Unsupportive seating
* Incorrect work station set up (computer, chair, table etc.)
* Activities involving sustained postures
* Repetitive activities
* Increased neural tension
* Tight muscles
* Hypomobile vertebrae and joints

**How can I self-manage it?**

Try to be aware of your posture when pain comes on

Reduce the time spent in one position

Organise OH&S to do a work station assessment

Use heat to reduce pain

Seek postural assessment and exercises to address contributing factors

**What your physiotherapist can do to help**

* Posture assessment and education (cervical and thoracic spine, scapular position)
* Ergonomic assessment
* Pilates education
* Deep cervical flexor muscle retraining
* Joint mobilisation
* Massage and trigger point release
* Acupuncture or dry needling
* Taping
* Stretches (neck, pec muscle)

**Further Management**

It is likely that if posture and aggravating activities are not addressed and modified, then pain will be on-going. Education and awareness is vital for self-correction. Pilates is an ideal method of improving stability and correcting posture.