

HEADS UP ON TECH NECK



ACA SPINAL HEALTH WEEK
26 MAY - 1 JUNE 2025

Adjust Your Thinking.

spinalhealthweek.org.au

ACA AUSTRALIAN CHIROPRACTORS ASSOCIATION CONSULT A CHIRO

MEDIA ALERT: 30 April 2025

Tech Neck Time Bomb: Spinal Health Week Exposes Hidden Cost to Australians' Health & Productivity

“Get the heads up on tech neck!” – National Spinal Health Week is 26 May to 1 June 2025

With over 5.3 million Australians suffering from neck pain including **Tension Neck Syndrome**, a musculoskeletal disorder (MSD) commonly known as ‘tech neck’ or ‘text neck’, national *Spinal Health Week* (26 May to 1 June 2025) is dedicated to promoting spinal health and preventing the incidences of tech neck in Australians of all ages.

MSDs affect the joints, bones, muscles and multiple body areas (including the neck) and cost the Australian economy over \$55 billion annually through direct health costs, lost productivity and reduced quality of life.

Dr Billy Chow, President of the Australian Chiropractors Association (ACA) said, “With tech neck emerging as a growing global public health concern, together with the projected increase in MSDs over the next two decades, the health burden on Australians and our economy is and will continue to be significant.”

“With over 34 million mobile phone connections and 95% of Australians accessing the internet via a smartphone, the focus of ACA’s annual national *Spinal Health Week* (26 May to 1 June 2025) is on encouraging Australians to adjust their thinking and take proactive steps to improve their spinal health and avoid debilitating tech neck,” said Dr Chow.

“Once primarily experienced by seniors, with the advent of smart devices and wide-spread use of tablets and computers by people of all ages including children; we’re seeing a growing number of younger patients in their 30s and 40s suffering from cervical spine disorders due to incorrect use of technology devices,” he said.

Studies have shown smartphone and computer use can have a significant impact on pain severity among tech neck sufferers with the most prevalent symptoms of neck and back pain linked to the length of time spent using a device and the degree of discomfort experienced.

Caused by poor posture and the prolonged or incorrect use of digital devices, tech neck can lead to headaches, neck, shoulder and upper back pain that over time, can lead to changes to the natural curve of the cervical spine.

A recent study ‘*The Association Between Mobile Phone Usage Duration, Neck Muscle Endurance, and Neck Pain Among University Students*’ published in *Nature* (29.8.2024), examined the correlation between phone use, duration, addiction, neck muscle endurance, and neck pain in university students.

“Although the study focused on mobile phone use by university students, with almost 87% of Australians now regular smartphone users and 75.5% being daily computer users, it’s fair to consider the findings may be broadly applied to the population generally, particularly young people who’ve grown up using smartphones and tablets,” said Dr Chow.

“While more studies are needed to better understand the implications of incorrect and overuse of technology on spinal health; to help prevent tech neck, we need to re-think how we use devices particularly young people who spend prolonged periods with their head bent forward viewing a smartphone,” he said.

“When it comes to smartphones, not only must we monitor the length of time we use our devices, but we must be cognisant that overuse and the way we use them can negatively impact our spinal health as well as our mental health,” Dr Chow said.

“The ACA recommends limiting recreational screentime to two hours per day, holding devices at eye level to prevent bending the neck forward, changing posture and taking regular breaks every ten minutes to look away from the device and move the neck from side-to-side.”

“Computer use is also a primary cause of tech neck. Although most common among office workers, with 75.5% of Australians aged 16 to 64 using computers daily, incorrect use and computer set up can lead to a range of MSDs.

“Whether using a laptop or a desktop at home, school, university or at work; it’s essential to take regular postural breaks every 30 minutes for movement and stretching and ensure workstations are set up ergonomically correct to help prevent tech neck, increase productivity and maintain overall spinal health and wellbeing,”

“During Spinal Health Week, we’re encouraging all Australians to adjust their thinking on how they use smartphones, tablets and computers to help prevent persistent, aggravated head, neck and upper back injuries which impact productivity at home, school and at work,” he said.

For sufferers of tech neck, while medications may offer temporary relief from neck and back pain, academic studies (including a Sydney University study) show opioids do not benefit people with acute neck or back pain (lasting up to 12 weeks) and have no positive role in treatment.

However, studies have shown that commencing treatment for tech neck promptly is crucial in preventing further functional decline and progression to a chronic condition. Effective treatment outcomes are achieved through a combination of strengthening and stretching exercises, manual therapy and postural correction.

“Every week over 400,000 chiropractic healthcare consultations help create well-adjusted Australians as ACA chiropractors play an important role in improving the spinal health of everyday Australians,” said Dr Chow.

“This Spinal Health Week, we’re inviting Australians to join the movement to learn and share practical strategies that can help prevent tech neck, promote overall spinal health and wellbeing, and reduce the economic and personal burden of MSDs,” Dr Chow said.

As a leader in musculoskeletal health, ACA has invested over \$2.3 million to advance research in building evidence-based practice for chiropractic healthcare and promotes the importance of maintaining spinal health through its annual flagship campaign, **National Spinal Health Week** - Australia’s longest running and award-winning health awareness campaign dedicated to improving the spinal health of Australians of all ages.

Get the heads up on tech neck and download ACA’s FREE *Avoiding Tech Neck Factsheets* and *Electronic Device Checklists for Adults, Parents and Students, the Ergonomic Checklist*, and the *Stand Corrected Stretching Poster* available to download from www.spinalhealthweek.org.au.

#HeadsUponTechNeck #SpinalHealthWeek #ConsultAChiro #AdjustYourThinking #TechNeck #NeckPain #ChiropracticHealthcare #Health #SHW25

- ENDS -

INTERVIEW REQUESTS

A variety of spokespersons including case studies are available for interview via Insight Communications **02 9518 4744**



Clare Collins M: 0414 821 957 E: clare@insightcommunications.net.au

Alice Collins M: 0414 686 091 E: alice@insightcommunications.net.au

For information about national **Spinal Health Week 2025**, contact ACA **02 8844 0400** or visit spinalhealthweek.org.au.

MEDIA CENTRE - SPINAL HEALTH WEEK 2025: <https://bit.ly/SHW25-Media>

National Spinal Health Week Campaign Launch - SUNDAY 25 MAY 2025

In launching Spinal Health Week on Sunday 25 May 2025, the ACA will release new findings obtained from an independent national survey demonstrating the impact neck pain has on Australian sufferers and the importance of spinal health for everybody.

ACA MEDIA SPOKESPERSONS - NATIONAL & ALL STATES & TERRITORIES

Dr Billy Chow – President, Australian Chiropractors Association – National & South Australia

ACA President, Dr Billy Chow graduated as a chiropractor from RMIT University in 1998. Since graduating he has had a varied and enriching career in private practice, on boards and in business. Dr Chow is passionate about educating and inspiring people to make better choices and to live happier and healthier lives. Dr Chow is a lecturer at the Australian Chiropractic College, Adelaide and has a healthcare business consultancy where he provides healthcare practitioners with personalised business support and mentorship.

Dr David Cahill – Vice President, National & Victoria

ACA Vice President, Dr David Cahill has been a registered, practicing chiropractor since 1991, in the Malvern East area of Melbourne since 1998. He loves helping people of all ages, from newborn babies and toddlers to those in their more senior years. David is very active in post-graduate education, continually upskilling in many aspects of chiropractic. David's passion is to help people have transformative experiences, enabling them to do more of what they love in their lives.

Dr Anthony Coxon – National & Victoria

Dr Anthony Coxon is a caring and respected chiropractor with 30 years' experience. In 2009, he completed Post Doctorate studies in Chiropractic Neurorehabilitation. This additional qualification gives Anthony skills in dealing with more complex cases, particularly patients that experience balance disorders and dizziness. He is the current Vice President of the Australian Chiropractors Association (ACA). In addition to running a busy practice, Anthony has also appeared on countless print, radio and television media spots including 'A Current Affair', 'Today Tonight', the 'Today Show' and the Evening news on all commercial television stations. Anthony sees daily how chiropractic care and a healthy lifestyle can bring vitality and wellbeing to his patients.

Dr Ashley Dent – Tasmania

Dr Dent graduated from Macquarie University in Sydney in 2010 where he was awarded the Ed Devereaux Award for Services to the Student Body. He is active within the Australian Chiropractors Association at a state and national level chairing the public engagement committee and being a member of two other committees. He volunteers his time with St Vincent de Paul to bring chiropractic care to the homeless and vulnerable in Hobart. Dr Dent has a keen passion for helping people improve their long standing (chronic) back and neck pain and then progressing their spinal health through exercise and rehabilitation so that they are stronger and healthier than they've ever been.

Dr Kim Lie Jom – NSW

Dr Kim Lie Jom has been a registered and practicing chiropractor in NSW for the past 30 years. His commitment to the well-being of his patients extends beyond the chiropractic adjustments, as he understands the importance of holistic health for every individual. With a family of three kids of his own, he truly comprehends the value of family wellness. As a respected community leader, Dr Jom has become an integral part of the local community. His reputation extends not only for his exceptional chiropractic skills but also for his dedication to community service. He is a proud member of the Australian Chiropractors Association (ACA), showcasing his commitment to the highest standards of professional practice. His involvement in the ACA goes beyond membership – he currently holds several key positions within the organisation, including Public Education, Audit and Risk, the Eastern Regional Committee. He is a dedicated member of the Australian Spinal Research Foundation (ASRF), demonstrating his commitment to advancing chiropractic knowledge and contributing to research in the field. Dr Jom's prominence in the chiropractic community is exemplified by his passion, dedication, and leadership in promoting health and wellbeing for individuals and families alike.

Dr Damian Kristof –Australian Chiropractors Association – National & Victoria

Nutritionist, Naturopath and Chiropractor, Dr Damian Kristof is a highly sought-after presenter and speaker in the Wellness industry. With over 20 years of experience, Damian's in-depth knowledge of the body, nervous system, food functions and responses coupled with his friendly and dynamic presenting style, has him in high demand. Focusing on food as key to unlocking optimal health and wellness, Damian presents in-depth facts and concepts that have never been readily available to the public - offering all audiences from industry experts to the public highly valuable content as he engages, educates and inspires audiences across the globe.

Dr Michelle Ronan – Victoria

Michelle has been a registered chiropractor since graduating from RMIT in 2005 and has practiced in the Albert Park area since 2010. Michelle's passion lies in helping people's bodies perform better to allow them to get more out of life, whether that be to enhance sports performance, rehabilitation of chronic conditions, during pregnancy or to support general health and wellbeing. Michelle loves helping people of all ages and stages of life on their health journey. Michelle previously sat on the Victorian branch of the CAA (now the Australian Chiropractors Association), and is currently completing a Masters through RMIT.

Dr Adam Smith – Queensland

Dr Adam Smith (Chiropractor) has more than 20 years' experience in family-based chiropractic care. He has experience working in many communities around Australia and internationally, including regularly serving on committees that guide health policy on a state and Australian federal level, as well as in the UK. With a special interest in family health and wellness, Dr Adam works with local community groups, charities, workplaces and schools to improve access to chiropractic care for those who want it. He believes that all Australians should have access to quality chiropractic services, so he is currently working with a group that is expanding chiropractic access in regional and rural areas of Australia across six states and territories.

Dr Joshua Tymms – Western Australia

Dr Joshua Tymms is a registered chiropractor with nearly two decades of clinical experience, graduating from Murdoch University with a double degree in 2006. He has worked with many elite-level athletes throughout his career and remains passionate about advancing spinal health. Josh is currently completing a double Masters degree in Public Health and Business Administration to strengthen his skills in health leadership, research, and advocacy. He serves as Vice President of the Advanced Bio-Structural Correction Australasia (ABCA) Board, leading efforts to grow the research base supporting spinal health interventions. Josh has held various leadership roles within the Australian Chiropractors Association over the past decade, advocating strongly for the profession and its future. He remains committed to helping communities live healthier, more active lives through chiropractic care.

Dr Ali Young – Western Australia

Dr Ali Young is a Chiropractor with over 20 years' experience working specifically with families, children and women. She has owned practices and worked in both Western Australia and Queensland, and loves taking care of those children that love that extra jolt of frivolity, playfulness and joy in their healthcare. She is an advocate for Working Mothers, with her book, *Work. Mama. Life* widely received upon its publication in 2022. She is a mother of two and now works with women in her Holistic Health Business space, combining these two great loves with her chiropractic work. She is a sought-after speaker, MC, and strategist for working mothers in the allied health space who both own businesses and want to live large whilst avoiding burnout. She has written for most major newspapers around Australia, has a podcast "Work Mama Life" with nearly 20,000 downloads, and provides support in the online space for women and mothers. She has been a chiropractic patient since she was 15 years old and thinks there is no greater gift than providing the support families need to allow their health to shine.

JOURNALIST NOTES

The Australian Chiropractors Association & Spinal Health Week

Established in 1938, the Australian Chiropractors Association (ACA) is the peak body representing chiropractors. The ACA promotes the importance of maintaining spinal health to improve musculoskeletal health through non-invasive, drug-free spinal health and lifestyle advice to help Australians of all ages lead and maintain healthy lives.

The ACA is the premier association for chiropractic in Australia. With around 3,000 members, the ACA is Australia's largest chiropractic health body and has taken a leadership role in promoting the importance of maintaining a healthy spine to improve the overall health and wellbeing of every Australian. ACA develops and promotes professional standards for chiropractors, has invested \$2.2 million to advance research in musculoskeletal health, builds evidence-based practice for chiropractic healthcare and actively promotes the importance of spinal health through its annual flagship campaign, national Spinal Health Week.

Every week 400,000 chiropractic healthcare consultations are creating well-adjusted Australians. With so many Australians visiting a chiropractor every week, chiropractors play an important role in improving the spinal health of everyday Australians.

National Spinal Health Week (26 May to 1 June 2025) is the initiative of the ACA, dedicated to improving the spinal health of all Australians through increasing awareness of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) which currently costs the Australian economy over \$55.1 billion annually.

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