

Study: 'Text neck' becoming an 'epidemic'

By Lindsey Bever, Washington Post

The human head weighs about a dozen pounds. But as the neck bends forward and down, the weight on the cervical spine begins to increase. At a 15-degree angle, this weight is about 27 pounds, at 30 degrees it's 40 pounds, at 45 degrees it's 49 pounds, and at 60 degrees it's 60 pounds.

That's the burden that comes with staring at a smartphone – the way millions do for hours every day, according to research published by Kenneth Hansraj in the National Library of Medicine.

The study will appear next month in *Surgical Technology International*. Over time, researchers say, this poor posture, sometimes called “text neck,” can lead to early wear-and-tear on the spine, degeneration and even surgery.

“It is an epidemic or, at least, it's very common,” Hansraj, chief of spine surgery at New York Spine Surgery and Rehabilitation Medicine, told the *Washington Post*. “Just look around you, everyone has their heads down.”

Can't grasp the significance of 60 pounds? Imagine carrying an 8-year-old around your neck several hours per day.

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