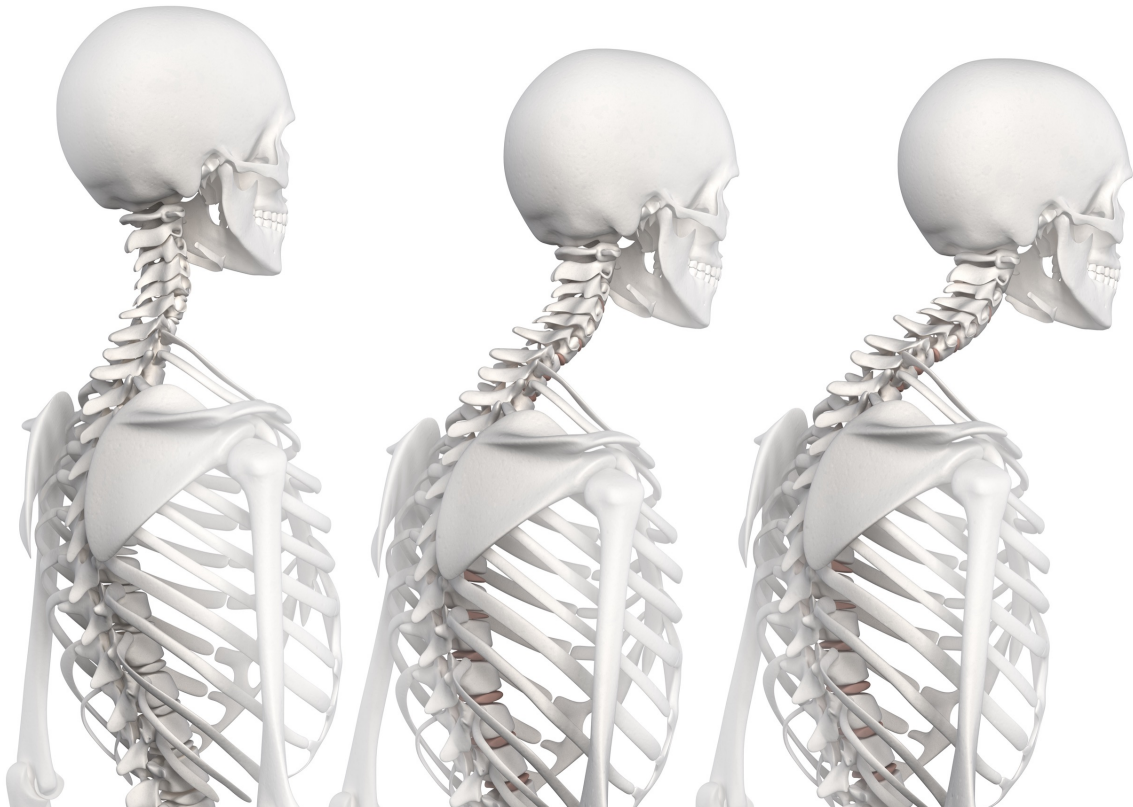


**DO YOU
HAVE A
42-POUND
HEAD?**

By Erik Dalton



Do you ever find yourself leaning toward your screen, with your shoulders rounded and your head jutting forward? It's so common today that most of us don't give it a second thought. But what feels like a harmless habit can actually double or triple the weight your neck must carry.

Massage therapists and bodyworkers refer to this as the "42-pound head" effect, because for every inch your head drifts forward, the strain on your neck and upper back muscles increases by approximately ten pounds. What starts as a simple posture habit can soon feel like your body is carrying a bowling ball where your head should be.

WHAT IS A 42-POUND HEAD?

Ideally, your ear should line up directly over your shoulder. In this position, your head weighs about 10–12 pounds, and your spine carries the load with ease. But when your head shifts forward, even by an inch or two, it changes everything. The neck muscles have to hold the head up against gravity, working overtime to keep your eyes level with the horizon.

As your neck struggles to cope, it often loses its natural curve or becomes flattened. The thoracic spine rounds and the small muscles at the base of the skull contract constantly to stabilize your visual field. Meanwhile, the supportive muscles at the front of the neck and between the shoulder blades become weak and inactive. This tug-of-war inside your body creates a cascade of imbalances that can leave you stiff, sore, and drained.



WHY IT MATTERS NOW, NOT LATER

It's tempting to dismiss posture problems as "just the way I sit" or assume you'll fix them later with a few stretches. But forward head posture puts stress on your entire system. This condition stresses your joints, compresses nerves, and makes it harder for your ribcage to expand fully.

Now, less oxygen is moving through your body, more tension is in your neck and shoulders, and pain can creep into your jaw, head, or even your lower back. Overtime, you may experience headaches, digestive upset, reduced lung capacity, and balance problems in older adults. And because posture influences mood and self-image, the way you carry your head can subtly affect how you feel about yourself each day.

The longer the posture remains uncorrected, the harder it becomes to change. Muscles adapt, joints stiffen, and the nervous system begins to treat the misalignment as "normal." That's why early intervention is so necessary. Addressing the problem now not only relieves pain but also prevents further

complications. It helps prevent years of wear and tear that can lead to arthritis, disc problems, or permanent changes in the shape of your spine.

THE MAT SOLUTION

This is where Myoskeletal Alignment Techniques® (MAT) comes in. Unlike a general massage or quick stretch, MAT is a comprehensive approach to postural issues developed by therapist and educator Erik Dalton, PhD.

MAT combines advanced bodywork techniques and corrective movement retraining into a powerful system that helps the body realign naturally. A Master Myoskeletal Therapist (MMT) has completed extensive training in analyzing and treating posture-related dysfunctions, such as forward head posture. They can:

- Release tight muscles at the back of the neck, shoulders, and chest
- Activate weak stabilizers at the front of the neck and between the shoulder blades
- Mobilize stiff joints in the neck and upper back to restore healthy movement
- Re-educate the nervous system so your body "remembers" how proper posture feels

Many clients find that after working with a trained massage therapist or bodyworker, they not only stand taller and move more freely but also breathe more deeply, sleep better, and experience less stress throughout the day.

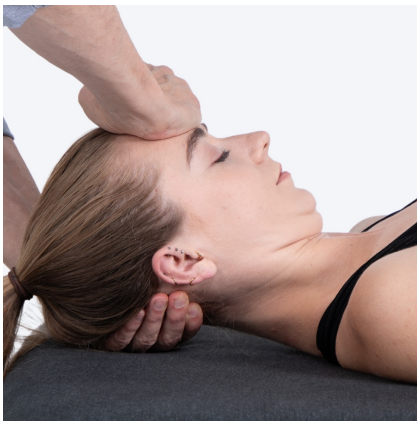
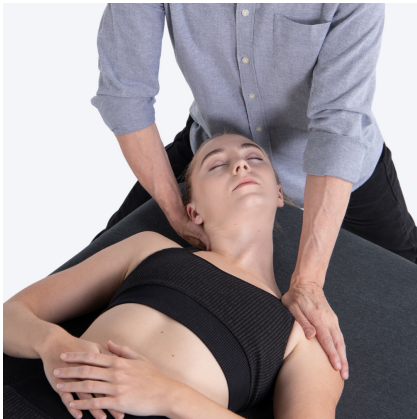


WHAT YOU CAN DO TODAY

While professional treatment is the gold standard for correcting forward head posture, there are simple things you can do right now to ease the strain:

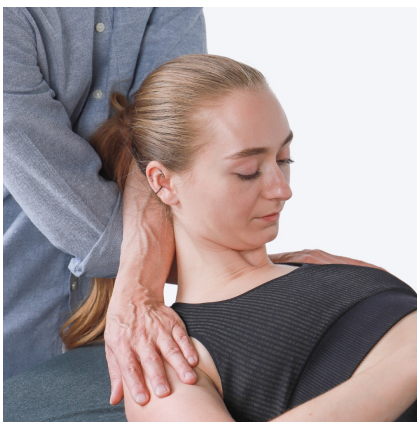
- Check your alignment: Imagine a string lifting the crown of your head gently upward, bringing your ears back over your shoulders.
- Take screen breaks: Every 20–30 minutes, pause to stretch your chest and roll your shoulders back.
- Breathe deeply: Expand your ribcage fully with each breath to support natural alignment.
- Strengthen and stretch: Light chin-tuck exercises and doorway stretches can help reinforce balance between tight and weak muscles.

These habits make a difference, but when posture has been out of alignment for years, professional guidance is essential.



STAND TALL AND FEEL YOUR BEST!

The images here show just a few of the techniques your therapist will apply to address your posture and pain symptoms. Forward head posture doesn't have to define you. With awareness, small daily changes, and expert care from a therapist trained in Myoskeletal Alignment Techniques® (MAT), you can reverse the strain of a “42-pound head.”



**CONTACT YOUR
THERAPIST FOR AN
APPOINTMENT TODAY!**