

## CHAPTER 6

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR PATIENTS WITH ACUTE NECK PAIN

Keep your head up at all times. When you allow the head to droop as in reading, knitting, sewing and performing desk tasks, you place further strains on the already overstretched or injured tissues. Maintenance of good posture is essential.

Do not roll the head around and avoid quick movements, especially turning the head quickly.

Avoid those positions and movements which initially caused your problems. You must allow some time for healing to take place.

Do not sleep with more pillows than necessary. If you are comfortable with one pillow, then use only one. The contents of the pillow should be adjustable in order to provide a proper support for the neck.

When you remain uncomfortable at night, you may benefit from a supportive roll.

Do not sleep face down, at this places great strains on the neck.

Do not lie in the bath for any length of time, as this bends your head and neck forwards, excessively.

Carefully start with the self-treatment exercises. Remember, an initial pain increase can be expected when commencing any of the exercises. This pain should reduce or centralise as you repeat the movements.

## CHAPTER 7

# SUMMARY

In order to treat present neck problems successfully you must do the following:

- **at all times:** correct your posture and maintain the correct posture.
- **when in acute pain:** if possible, perform exercises 1 and 2; if not possible, then do exercises 3 and 4.
- **when pain more to one side and not responding:** first exercise 5, later exercises 1 and 2.
- **when acute pain has subsided:** exercises 6 and 7, always followed by exercises 1 and 2.

In order to prevent future neck problems successfully you must do the following:

- **at all times:** maintain good postural habits.
- **when no pain or stiffness:** twice per day exercise 6, always followed by exercises 1 and 2.
- **at first sign of recurrence:** postural correction and exercises 1 and 2 at regular intervals — that is, ten times per session and six to eight sessions per day.