

## CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

Neck problems are referred to in different ways such as arthritis in the neck, spondylosis of the neck, rheumatism, fibrositis, slipped disc; or, when it concerns pain extending into the arm, neuritis and neuralgia.

Most of us suffer at some time during our life from pain in the region of the neck, or pain arising from the neck which is felt across the shoulders, in the shoulder blade, the upper or lower arm. Pain coming from the neck can also be felt in the hand and symptoms such as pins and needles or numbness can be experienced in the fingers. Some people are troubled by headaches, the cause of which can be traced to problems in the neck.

Usually these aches and pain occur intermittently — that is, there are times in the day or there are days that no pain is felt. The symptoms may appear mysteriously, often for no apparent reason, and just as mysteriously they disappear. These aches and pains may also occur constantly — that is, pain to some degree or other is felt at all times. People who have pain all of the time are frequently forced to take pills. It is uncommon for these people to have to stop work, although this occasionally happens. More often the pain simply makes their life miserable and they have to reduce their activities in order to keep the discomfort at a moderate level. Neck problems can thus affect our lifestyle.

If you have problems of this nature, you may already have discovered that the symptoms can last sometimes for months or even years. Or you may have found out that treatments are often able to stop your pain, but the pain returns at some time later to affect you once more. You may be reading this book because you have persistent pains that have not disappeared, despite the fact that you may have received the best of treatment. Whatever the situation, you most likely will realise that many of the treatments, dispensed by doctors, physiotherapists and chiropractors, are prescribed for your present symptoms and are not directed at preventing future