

Posture Shirt as Good as Exercise in Reducing Neck Pain

With more than 80% of adult Chiari patients living with moderate to severe neck related disability, it is no wonder that they are constantly searching for relief. Now, a study from Spain has found that wearing a posture shirt regularly can be just as effective as an exercise program in reducing neck pain. The study recruited 63 healthcare professionals with chronic, non-specific neck pain, which was defined as pain of at least moderate intensity which had lasted for at least 3 months and was not due to a known structural issue.

The participants were randomly assigned to either wear a Medi Posture Plus Force shirt (Figure 1) 2-4 hours every day for 3 months, or to undergo a home exercise program comprised of strengthening and stretching activities which were taught to them by a professional. After the initial three months there was a three-month break and then the participants switched groups for another three-month period. This type of cross-over study design has the benefit of comparing two treatments on the same individuals. Participants were evaluated at the start and after each intervention period for pain (0-100), spinal curve using a scan, neck related disability, and pain catastrophizing (how an individual thinks and feels about pain).

The researchers found that both the exercise program and the posture shirt reduced self-reported pain scores by 26% and neck related disability by a significant amount as well. Interestingly, the largest reduction was seen in pain catastrophizing scores which were cut in half by each program, however there was no change to the participants' spinal curves. The team concluded that overall the shirt was just as effective as the exercise program in reducing neck pain and improving the participants' function and mental health.

The theory behind the shirt's effectiveness is that poor posture in the mid-back can lead to improper load bearing in the cervical, or neck, region of the spine. The shirt has inelastic fibers which promote proper muscle activation of the body's core and scapular muscles and according to the company's website, "the functional elements in the shoulder and back area work together with the slightly compressive material to give the wearer a "reminder" when they move out of the desired position."

It is important to keep in mind that this study used adults with non-specific neck pain. It is not clear if the shirt would be as effective, or effective at all, in helping Chiari patients with their neck pain, but it certainly seems worth investigating.

Figure 1: Medi Posture Plus Force Shirt



Source: Extended Multicenter Study on the Postural Shirt for Women With Chronic Nonspecific Cervical Pain: A Randomized Crossover Clinical Trial. Avellanet M, Mena A, Pages E, Boada-Pladellorens A. *Cureus*. 2025 May 22;17(5):e84629. doi: 10.7759/cureus.84629. eCollection 2025 May. PMID: 40546649

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