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Repetitive Surf Injury

- The latest RSI risk is revealed by Yahoo! and the British Chiropractic Association
 - Figures show that 8 million access the internet on the move
- Yahoo! and the British Chiropractic Association (BCA) join forces to combat RSI

London, 30th April 2009: Figures¹ released by Yahoo! reveal that our obsession with the information superhighway is growing, with 8 million people in the UK accessing the internet on the move.

As usage of the worldwide web expands, there is increasing concern that consumers may be risking their posture and putting themselves at risk of RSI injuries. The frequency of use, and the way in which people are accessing the web via different devices when at home, at work and on the move means that the pressure on our bodies is significant.

Repetitive Strain Injuries already affect half a million workers in the UK² with an estimated 5.4 million days lost to sickness from RSI, figures which are likely to grow.

Yahoo! knows that more and more people are looking for brilliant things from the internet so it has linked up with the British Chiropractic Association (BCA) to help users avoid 'Repetitive Surf Injury'.

With the advent of mobile technology, BCA chiropractors have reported seeing increasing amounts of patients whose back pain and neck pain is due to the using laptops and mobile phones. In fact, research³ reveals that over 56% of the population owning up to having a bad posture, and 43% blame their posture problems on the use of a laptop.

Iain Thompson General Manager Yahoo! Finance Europe says: "RSI-type conditions have been estimated to cost industry of up to £20 billion/year⁴, which has major implications when it comes to productivity. As a nation we are demanding more and more from the internet and we want access anywhere and everywhere. Location is no longer a barrier when it comes to logging on but it does mean we are laying ourselves bare to potential RSI problems. We don't need to stop surfing we just

¹ Mediascope Europe 2008

² TUC figures

³ Research sample: 5000 conducted by OnePoll on behalf of the BCA, April 2009

⁴ Stop RSI Campaign

need to surf safely to remain injury free to continue to enjoy all the brilliant content the web offers.”

Tim Hutchful from British Chiropractic Association comments: “Sitting down puts almost twice as much pressure on the spine than standing up, so we are more at risk from posture pains when seated. As chiropractors we are finding that, when on the move, people are balancing laptops on their legs so users stare down at the screen which in turn puts strain on their necks, shoulders and backs. Holding your head and neck in this unsupported position can place increased load on the joints of the neck and reduce blood flow to the surrounding muscles causing inflammation, stiffness and pain.

“So many phones nowadays have a built-in internet browser, and as technology is developing, gadgets are getting smaller and so the buttons are closer together. Small, fine movements tend to aggravate more than larger movements - this coupled with the smaller buttons can lead to injury as smaller buttons are harder to activate. These movements may cause a lack of blood flow to the tendons and muscles of the thumb and may cause inflammation of the joint at the base of the thumb.”

Yahoo! has teamed up with the British Chiropractic Association to help all the internet addicts from avoiding surfing side-effects:

Laptops

- If you must use your laptop on the move, don't sit in the same position for long periods as you are looking down onto the screen with your head unsupported
- Rest the laptop on a table not on your lap
- Relax when sitting into your chair, making sure you have your bottom against the seat back and your shoulder blades are touching the back rest of the chair
- Arms should be flat and your elbows level with the desk or table you are using. Use a seat with arm rests
- If you carry a laptop use a rucksack design laptop case, carry it on both shoulders and adjust the straps so that the bag is held close to your back

Mobile phones

- Support your arm on a chair or table to take the 'load' off the neck and shoulder muscles
- Massage your arm from the wrist to the elbow at regular intervals
- Swap hands regularly and vary the fingers you are using
- Sit in a neutral upright position - head over shoulders and arms comfortably near the body
- The best way to avoid injury is to flex your hand muscles as this will keep the blood flowing and will break up the repetition.
- The weight of a phone may not feel much, but it is significantly increased if the arm is held out stretched, as it will increase the load of muscles and joints

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NOTES TO THE EDITOR

About Yahoo!

Yahoo! Inc. is a leading global Internet brand and one of the busiest Internet destinations worldwide. Yahoo! is focused on powering its communities of users, advertisers, publishers, and developers by creating indispensable experiences built on trust. Yahoo! is headquartered in Sunnyvale, California.

For more information, visit www.yahoo.co.uk

About the British Chiropractic Association

Chiropractic is a primary health-care profession that specialises in the diagnosis, treatment and overall management of conditions that are due to problems with the joints, ligaments, tendons and nerves of the body, particularly those of the spine.

The BCA represents well over 50% of UK chiropractors. Chiropractic is a statutorily regulated healthcare profession regulated by the General Chiropractic Council. Members of the BCA must abide by the GCC's Code of Conduct and Standard of Proficiency. The association only accepts graduates who have gone through a minimum four-year full-time internationally accredited degree course at an internationally recognised college of chiropractic education. Chiropractic care offers hands on pain management and focuses on muscles, joints and nerves. Chiropractic is suitable for all ages and can help with a wide range of aches and pains from head to toe. Chiropractors use their hands to 'adjust' or 'manipulate' the spine and joints where signs of restriction in movement are found and can also involve working on muscles. This restores normal function to the affected muscles, joints and nerves allowing the body to then get on with the job of healing itself. For more information visit www.chiropractic-uk.co.uk