

By Vrushali Purandare

People who use cellphones excessively are more prone to suffer from neck and spine-related problems, a condition that doctors have termed as 'text-neck' and has been on a steep rise recently.



With India being the second-largest country in terms of mobile users around the world with close to 600 millions registered users, the new illness is gaining pace with every passing day. Studies say that 75 percent of young adults have a cell

# Constantly on phone? You might fall prey to 'text-neck'

phone with them for almost 22 hours a day and if this so called addiction is not highlighted soon it will be a common phenomenon. As per the experts, if 'text neck' is not corrected at right time this can also lead to spinal arthritis. Other symptoms like loss of power grip, poor concentration, disturbed sleep pattern and increased twitching of the neck and shoulders too are on a rise.

According to Dr Nikhil Arbatti, Minimal Access & Endoscopic Spine Surgeon, Nanavati hospital said that today's generation should be educated about the effects of

it. "Characterised headaches, pain in the upper back, shoulder and neck, as well as increased curvature of the spine are some of the main reasons behind it. If text-neck is left untreated, it can even lead to spinal degenerative problems, such as disc compression and disc prolapse which might lead to necessitating surgery," Arbatti said.

While mild to moderate cases can be treated with physiotherapy and medications, in severe cases surgical intervention, such as disc replacement surgery may be required. Off late with innovations in technology, disc re-

placement surgeries have become safe, cost-effective and minimally invasive.

Conventional surgeries involve removing the diseased disc between two cervical vertebrae and placing a bone graft in that slot to aid the formation of solid bone bridging the vertebrae. Complete removal of the diseased disc does cure the pain since it was the bulging components of this disc that press against the spinal cord and nerve roots that generate pain in the neck and arms. However, the fusion procedure hinders motion and flexibility of the spine at that level.