

Choosing The Right Pillow **By Rhonda Yeska, DPT, CMTPT** **Orthopedic & Spine Therapy of Waupaca and Clintonville**

Do you have difficulty picking out a pillow or ever wake up with neck pain? It may just be that you need the right information to help aide in your decision of choosing a pillow fit for you.

The right pillow can make a difference in your sleeping position and thus can affect how your neck feels ultimately. The right pillow will provide the necessary support for the head and neck alleviating or preventing unnecessary causes of pain.

When looking for a pillow it is important to try it out. You will be looking for two things: support and comfort. It is imperative that these two concepts be achieved in order to relief pressure points and restore balance throughout your head and neck so that you wake up feeling well rested. Overall, the purpose of a pillow is to keep the spine in a neutral position.

When lying on your back, you need a pillow that will support your neck by filling the space between your neck and the mattress but does not tilt your head too forward. Conversely, if the height of the pillow is too low, your neck muscles will be strained due to the lack of support possibly leading to pain.

If you sleep on your side, the pillow you choose should allow your head to be in line with your neck and not tilt your head up or down. The pillow just needs to fill the space between the mattress and your ear so that the spine is in a natural horizontal line.

When sleeping on your stomach it would be best to have a flat pillow supporting your head and chest in order to keep a natural horizontal line of the spine. To improve comfort further, place a pillow under your stomach in order to prevent low back pain and keep the entire spine in a neutral, comfortable position.

Of importance to note, most down or feather pillows offer very little structural support compared to pillows filled with firmer materials such as foam. Consider this as you choose a pillow.

Lastly, it may not be the pillow if you continue to wake up with neck pain, Come to OST for a free consultation to see how we can help your neck pain.

Keywords: choosing the right pillow, pillow, sleep, neck pain, sleeping position, neck, spine, low back pain, down pillows, feather pillows, foam pillows