

## **Nordic Walking Helps Neck and Shoulders**

Finnish study (Anttila et al. 1999) compared pole walking with regular walking training for 12 weeks in 55 female office workers. The EMG measurement showed that electrical activities of the muscles in the upper body neck-shoulder-upper back) were significantly higher when walking with poles. Pole walking training diminished neck and shoulder symptoms and subjective feeling of pain. Mobility of the upper body increased as well. Similar results were also obtained in a study by Karvonen et al. (2000), who investigated neck-shoulder area pain on 31 persons aged 44-50 years who had no previous experience of pole walking. The group trained for 60 minutes per session twice a week for ten weeks. Pole walking reduced neck and shoulder pain in general and at work. In addition, the disturbance caused by neck and shoulder stiffness and pain in the movement of the head were significantly decreased. A third study (Koskinen et al. 2003) examined the effectiveness of Nordic walking on postural control and muscular strength of the lower extremities and the middle trunk in ageing employees. The subjects (n=24) were 45-61 years old, the majority of them being women. They engaged in pole walking three times weekly, partly under instruction. The subjects improved on health-related fitness parameters evaluated by the Fitness Test battery developed by the UKK Institute.