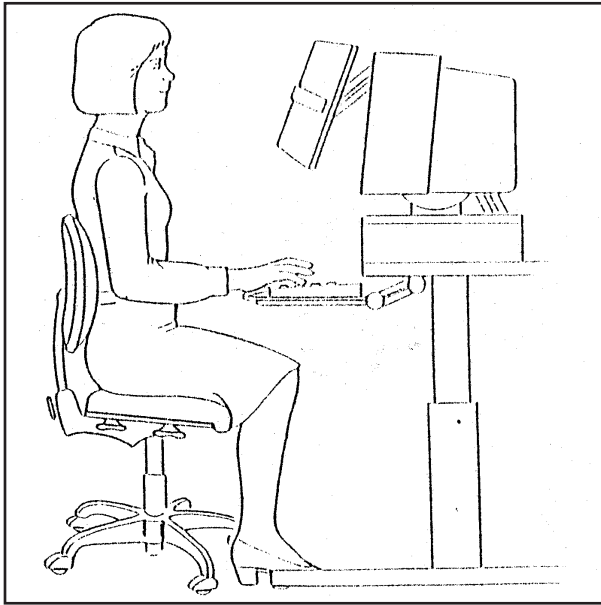


Home Exercise Program For Neck Pain



All drawings © The Saunders Group

General Information

Exercise is an important part of treating and preventing neck pain. Neck pain may be the result of poor posture, lack of exercise, emotional stress or injury.

Treat your neck and keep it healthy with good posture and exercise. This will help keep your spine healthy.

When your neck is overworked, you may feel pain in your head, upper back, shoulders and arms. You may also have tingling, numb fingers or feel dizzy or sick to your stomach.

Use a Correct Sitting Posture

- Avoid bending over a desk when you read or write.
- Raise your work to eye level when you can. This will keep you from bending your head down.

- Adjust your computer monitor to your eye level.
- Adjust the rear view mirror in your car when you are sitting straight, with your ears in line with your shoulders.

Change Your Position Often

Change your position often. This will keep stress and strain from your neck and upper back. Take lots of breaks when you are working on something for a long time. This will prevent overuse of the muscles and ligaments that support your neck.

Use Only One Pillow at Night

Support your head with one pillow when you sleep. It should keep your head in a level position. Putting too many pillows under your head can cause a “kink” in your neck in the morning.

Start Moving

An active lifestyle is an important part of treating and keeping a healthy spine. Aerobic exercise (such as walking, biking or swimming) increases blood flow to the muscles, ligaments and discs in your neck. Start with five minutes a day and work up to 20 to 30 minutes each day.

Start Neck Exercises

The exercises (on the back page) may help decrease your pain. Do these exercises one to three times a day.

If you have increased pain or discomfort, stop and call your health care provider.

(over)

Range of Motion Exercises (for Better Blood Flow and Flexibility)

Do these exercises three times a day. If you have increased pain or discomfort, stop and call your health care provider.

❑ Exercise No. 1



- Stand or sit.
- Place your hands behind your neck.
- Gently tilt your neck backward.
- Look at the ceiling.

❑ Exercise No. 2



- Stand or sit.
- Keep your spine straight.
- Face forward.
- Slowly tip your ear toward your shoulder. Bring your head back to your starting position.
- Switch sides.

❑ Exercise No. 3



- Stand or sit.
- Keep your spine straight.
- Face forward.
- Gently turn your head to the left. Bring your head back to your starting position.
- Switch sides.

Exercises to Strengthen Muscles

Do these exercises three times a day.

❑ Exercise No. 1



- Stand or sit.
- Keep your spine straight.
- Relax your shoulders at your side.
- Raise your shoulders toward your ears.
- Hold three seconds.

❑ Exercise No. 2



- Stand. Keep your spine straight.
- Bend your elbows at 90-degree angles.
- Squeeze your shoulder blades together as you rotate your arms outward.
- Hold for five seconds.

❑ Exercise No. 3



- Stand or sit.
- Keep your spine straight.
- Pull your head straight back.
- Do not tip or move your jaw.