

Neck Strain Rehabilitation Exercises

Do these exercises only if you do not have pain or numbness running down your arm or into your hand. Exercises 1 through 4 are meant to help your neck remain flexible. Exercise 5 will help you maintain or regain your range of motion.

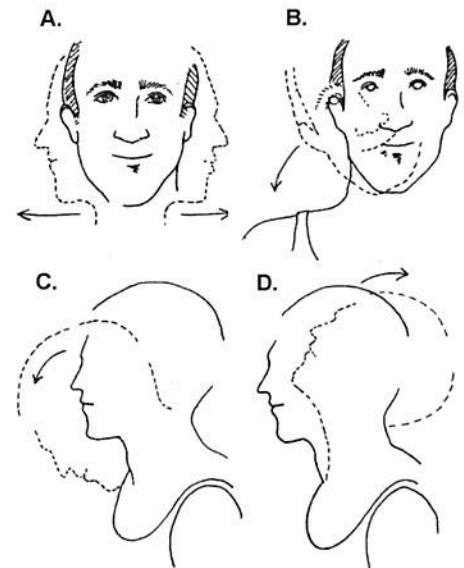
1. Neck range of motion exercises

A. Neck rotation: Sit in a chair, keeping your neck, shoulders, and trunk straight. First, turn your head slowly to the right. Move it gently to the point of pain. Move it back to the forward position. Relax. Then move it to the left. Repeat 10 times.

B. Neck side bend: Tilt your head so that your right ear moves toward your right shoulder. Move it to the point of pain. Then tilt your head so your left ear moves toward your left shoulder. Make sure you do not rotate your head while tilting or raise your shoulder toward your head. Repeat this exercise 10 times in each direction.

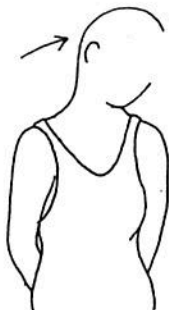
C. Neck flexion: Bend your head forward, reaching your chin toward your chest. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times.

D. Neck extension: Bring your head back so that your chin is pointing toward the ceiling. Repeat 10 times.



Neck range of motion exercises

2. Upper trapezius stretch: The upper trapezius muscle connects your shoulder to your head. Sitting in an upright position, put your right arm behind your back and gently grasp the right side of your head with your left hand to help tilt your head toward the left. You will feel a gentle stretch on your right side. Hold for 20 seconds. Repeat 3 times on each side.



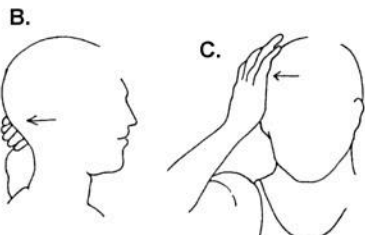
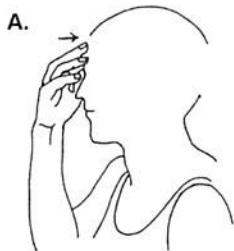
Scalene stretch

3. Scalene stretch: This stretches the neck muscles that attach to your ribs. Sitting in an upright position, clasp both hands behind your back, lower your left shoulder, and tilt your head toward the right. Hold this position for 20 seconds and then come back to the starting position. Lower your right shoulder and tilt your head toward the left until you feel a stretch. Hold for 20 seconds. Repeat 3 times on each side.



Upper trapezius stretch

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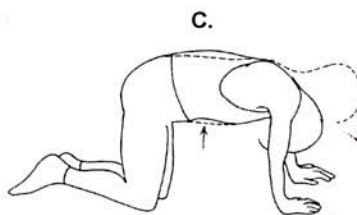
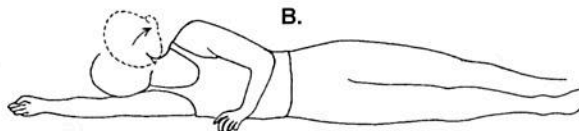
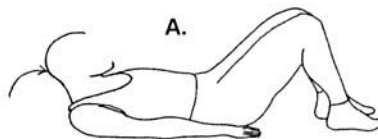
Neck isometric exercises

4. Neck isometric exercises

- A. Neck flexion: Sit upright, look straight ahead, and keep your chin level. Apply light pressure with your fingertips to your forehead, resisting bending your head forward. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 5 times.
- B. Neck extension: Sitting upright, apply light pressure with your fingertips to the back of your head, resisting the bending backward of your head. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 5 times.
- C. Neck side bend: Sitting upright, place your right palm on the right side of your head and press your head into your palm. Hold this for 5 seconds and then relax. Repeat the same resistance using your left hand on the left side of your head. Repeat on each side 5 times.

5. Head lifts

- A. Neck curl: Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor. Tuck your chin and lift your head toward your chest, keeping your shoulders on the floor. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times.
- B. Neck side bend: Turn onto your right side. With your right forearm underneath your head, lift your head slowly toward your left shoulder. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times. Switch to your left side and repeat the exercise lifting your head toward your right shoulder.
- C. Hands and knees neck extension: Get on your hands and knees and look down at the floor. Keep your back straight and let your head slowly drop toward your chest. Then tuck your chin and lift your head up until your neck is level with your back. Hold this position for 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times.



Head lifts