

Neck Strengthening Exercises

THESE EXERCISES

The exercises below help to strengthen the muscles around the neck. Having good flexibility will help balance the loads and strains on your neck joint. In addition, the stronger your neck muscles, the better they are able to hold your neck vertebra and joints in good alignment.

You should always be guided by your physical therapist who may add or delete exercises or stretches for your specific injury phase and severity. Remember whilst stretching you should not be in pain, if you are, please stop and consult your physical therapist to make adjustments.

Neck Flexion Overstretch

Bend your neck forwards, and place a hand on the back of your head and gently pull your neck so that your chin tucks downwards. This will stretch your neck muscles. Hold the stretch for the required time, and relax.

 **Video:**
<http://youtu.be/VwSRo8kdjeg>

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Levator Scapulae Stretch

Bend your neck forwards, and then side-bend your neck by taking your left ear towards your left shoulder. Hold on to a chair to make the stretch stronger. This will allow you to feel a stretch at the back and side of your neck. You can make the stretch stronger by assisting with your hand.

 **Video:**
<http://youtu.be/imLiENOKf14>

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Posterior Scalene Stretch

Place your fingers in the webbing of your neck (just above the collar bone), and rotate your neck to the opposite side, and tuck your chin down. You will feel the stretch under your fingers at the side of the neck. Hold the stretch, and relax. You can make the stretch stronger by using the hand on the side you are looking down at to gently pull your head further - essentially 'smelling your armpit'.

 **Video:**
<http://youtu.be/EdKGB0v4Mng>

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Wall Lean Neck Strengthening

Stand approximately 1 foot from a wall, place a towel behind your head, and lean against the towel. Make sure your body has good straight alignment, and keep your chin up. If you find this easy, stand a little further from the wall. You should feel a gentle muscle contraction at the back of your neck (you may not feel it at first, but after 20-30 seconds you will feel the muscle contraction).

 **Video:**
<http://youtu.be/TGfE3uvigIQ>

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Neck Flexor Strengthening

Lie on your back, with your head resting off the back of a pillow (so the neck is tilted backwards into extension slightly). Lift your head off the floor/bed while tucking your chin in slightly. You should feel the muscles at the front and side of your neck contracting.

 **Video:**
<http://youtu.be/ISfbvzoBnGc>

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Neck Flexion Goof Ball

Bend your neck forwards, pushing against a goofball resting against the wall. Hold the pressure, and relax. This is a strengthening exercise for your neck.

 **Video:**
<http://youtu.be/R6pJtqkC4go>

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