

*“Better than 90 percent of the energy output of the brain is used in relating the physical body in its gravitational field. The more mechanically distorted a person is, the less energy available for thinking, metabolism, and healing.” Roger Sperry, PhD. Medical Nobel Prize for brain research 1981*

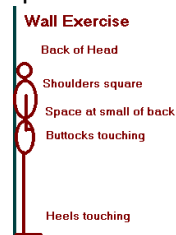
## Stretching and Strengthening Exercises

- ★ Take 5 minutes when you wake up and 5 minutes before you go to sleep at night to gently stretch your neck, chest muscles, and back. Keeping good range of motion and flexibility is important to prevent poor sleep posture habits trying to get comfortable and avoiding aches and pains.
- ★ Find places in your existing routine to stretch such as at red lights or while you are watching TV.
- ★ If you are sitting a lot, consider stretching and moving frequently throughout the day to prevent postural strain, stiffness and soreness. The key is to stretch and move the muscles that are working hard to try to support your body’s posture throughout the day.

## Create long term posture habits.

### □ Wall Posture

1. Stand next to a wall with your heels touching the wall and knees straight.
2. Make buttocks touch the wall.
3. Make shoulders touch the wall - do not flatten them fully against the wall, but square them and have them touch the wall at one level.
4. Make the back of your head, with chin level, touch the wall.
5. Hold this posture for a minute.
6. Raise your hand and tuck it between the wall and the small of your back. If there is lots of space it shows that you have lordosis (too much S-curve). You want to work on reducing that by flexing you lower abdominal muscles to draw the small of your back closer to the wall.
7. Now step away from the wall and try to maintain this posture while walking around.
8. Repeat this three times a day. This is the posture you should try to develop for walking.



### ❑ Neck Glide/Chin exercise

1. Begin by looking straight ahead.
2. Tuck your chin by pulling your head straight back.
3. Keep your nose and chin parallel to the ground. The chin is not tucked down, but rather back. Little movement occurs in this exercise.
4. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 15 times.



### ❑ Hands Up



Whenever you're doing something that does not require use of your hands, turn them so that they're palm-side up. You also can do it while standing or walking, leaving your arms down at your sides and turning your palms so that they face outward in the direction you're facing.

### ❑ Cervical Rotation

1. Turn head to right/left as far as you can until you feel a stretch. Hold this position for 30 seconds.



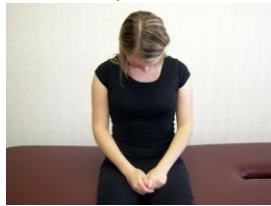
### ❑ Cervical Side Bending

1. Tilt head to side as far as you can until you feel a stretch on the side of your neck. Hold this position for 30 seconds



### ❑ Cervical Flexion

1. Look down and put your chin on your chest. You will feel a stretch on the back of your neck.
2. Hold this position for 30 seconds.



### ❑ Cervical Extension

1. Look up as far as you can. You will feel a stretch in the front of your neck.
2. Hold this position for 30 seconds.



## ❑ Shoulder Rolls

1. Start with good posture by sitting up straight, chin tuck, looking straight ahead and the arms by your side with your palms towards your body.
2. Take a deep breath in.
3. Exhale while bringing your shoulders up to your ears. Take another deep breath in.
4. Breathe out when rolling your shoulders forward.
5. Breathe in and exhale to roll your shoulders down.
6. One last breath in and slowly breathe out while rolling the shoulders to the back.
7. Perform this neck exercise 10 times.
8. Reverse the direction and repeat another 10 times.



## ❑ Corner Stretch

1. Stand in a corner and place your forearms on the wall as shown below.
2. Your elbows should be shoulder height.
3. Place your feet about 2.5 feet from the corner and then lean forward until you feel a stretch in your upper chest muscles.
4. Hold this position for 30 seconds.



## □ Head Press Exercises

1. For each exercise, keep your neck straight and look straight ahead.
2. To exercise muscles at the right side of the neck, put your right hand against the right side of your head above your ear. As you press against the side of your head with your hand, also press your head back against your hand. You should feel the muscles at the side of your neck tighten, but your head should not move to either side.
3. Press firmly, but not quite as hard as you can.
4. Hold for about 6 seconds, rest for up to 10 seconds, then repeat.
5. To exercise muscles at the left side of the neck, do the same steps as in the exercise above, but press your left hand against the left side of your head.
6. To exercise muscles at the back of the neck and upper back, lace your fingers or put one hand over the other and place your hands at the back of your head. Press your hands against your head at the same time you press your head straight back against your hands. Press firmly, but not quite as hard as you can. Do not tip your head back.
7. Hold for about 6 seconds, rest for up to 10 seconds, then repeat.
8. To exercise muscles at the front of the neck, put the heels of both hands against your forehead just above your eyebrows. Press your hands against your forehead at the same time you press your head against your hands. Press firmly, but not quite as hard as you can. Do not tip your head forward.
9. Hold for about 6 seconds, rest for up to 10 seconds, then repeat.
10. Repeat each exercise 8 to 12 times.



## □ Ball Stretch

\*\*\* You might want to skip this exercise if you feel dizzy or disoriented with your head upside down.

1. Lie face up on the ball and roll down until your back, head and neck are fully supported.
2. Relax your hips and let your arms fall out to the sides for a relaxing chest stretch.
3. Hold for 3-5 breaths and repeat as many times as you like.



## ▣ Full Body Stretch

\*\*\* You might want to skip this exercise if you feel dizzy or disoriented with your head upside down.

1. Sit on the ball and roll forward until you're at an incline.
2. Straighten the legs and stretch your body back, arms over the head.
3. Drape yourself over the ball, letting your head relax and your arms hang towards the floor.
4. Relax and breathe, holding for 15-20 seconds.



## ▣ Hug The Ball

1. Kneel in front of a stability ball.
2. Lean your trunk forward onto the ball and then roll forward so that you're draped over the ball.
3. Place your hands on the floor in front of the ball.
4. Relax your trunk and head down onto the ball.
5. Let your spine "melt" around the ball



## ❑ Back Extensions

1. Lie with your stomach on the ball.
2. With your legs out straight behind you, curl your toes under to keep from sliding.
3. Place your hands behind your head.
4. As you exhale, draw in your abdominals and lift your chest off of the ball.
5. Repeat 10 times.



## ❑ Working Out The Knots

1. Put a Tennis ball in a sock. Use the sock to raise or lower the level of the ball and lean against the wall with the ball placed over the painful muscles.
2. Lean with your back against the wall as you lower the ball to the level of pain.
3. Push your back into the tennis ball as hard as you can for a minimum of 30-90 seconds. It may bring you to tears.
4. Repeat as needed.

## ❑ Tennis Ball

1. Place two tennis balls next to each other tightly in a sports sock and secure the end.
2. Lie on the floor and place the tennis balls just under your head for at least 10 minutes while it stretches and eases occipital tension.