

> POSTURE AND BODY MECHANICS CONSIDERATIONS • Cervical Strain and Sprain

Maintaining the most appropriate posture and using correct body mechanics can have a significant effect on neck pain. The following are basic suggestions regarding proper posture and body mechanics. These should be specifically discussed with your physician, physical therapist, or athletic trainer. Please remember:

- Good posture minimizes the stress and strain on any portion of your spine.
- Do the exercises as *initially* prescribed by your physician, physical therapist, or athletic trainer.
- Incorporate these exercises and posture principles into all of your daily and recreational activities.



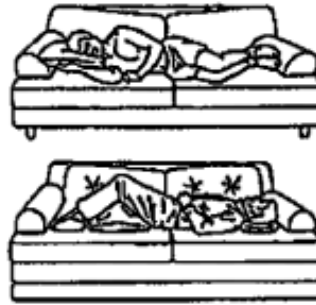
PROLONGED STANDING IN SLIGHT FLEXION

When you must stand in a position that requires a prolonged period of time and slight flexion, consider finding a foot stool or other object to place one foot on. This will assist in minimizing the load on your back.



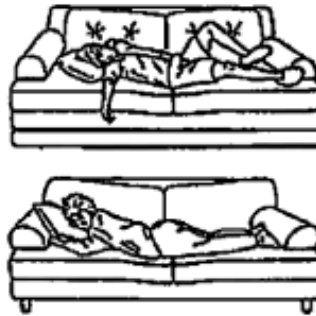
SLOUCHING

Avoid slouching when you walk or stand. Stand up straight. Walk erect and tall.



CORRECT REST POSTURES

Find a position of comfort on a surface firm enough to support your body weight. The most commonly suggested positions are sidelying with a pillow between your knees or on your back with a pillow under your knees.



INCORRECT REST POSTURES

Make sure that you have good support; this will minimize the chance of prolonged postural stress on your spine.



WORK STATION

1. When sitting at a desk or work station make sure you attempt to do the following:
2. Have an adjustable-height chair. It is critical that your feet touch the floor. If this is not possible because of chair and/or desk height, obtain a foot rest.
3. Make sure that your chair can fit under the desk and you can pull as close to your work surface as you need to.
4. Avoid slouching. Use a lumbar roll/cushion/pillow behind your low back.
5. Make sure that your work surface is the appropriate height.

STRENGTHENING EXERCISES • Cervical Strain and Sprain

These are some of the *initial* exercises you may start your rehabilitation program with until you see your physician, physical therapist, or athletic trainer again or until your symptoms are resolved. Please remember:

- Strong muscles with good endurance tolerate stress better.
- Do the exercises as *initially* prescribed by your physician, physical therapist, or athletic trainer. Progress slowly with each exercise, gradually increasing the number of repetitions and weight used under their guidance.



CERVICAL SPINE • Flexion Strength

1. Obtain a child's playground ball or towel roll approximately 6 to 8 inches in diameter.
2. Stand erect 12 to 18 inches from the wall. Place the ball between your forehead and the wall.
3. Gently push your forehead into the ball.
4. Hold this position for 15 to 20 seconds. Count out loud. Do not hold your breath.
5. Repeat exercise _____ times, _____ times per day.

Note: You can also do this exercise by using your hands in place of the ball; however, this technique may cause some discomfort due to the use of your arms.



CERVICAL SPINE • Side Bending Strength

1. Obtain a child's playground ball or towel roll approximately 6 to 8 inches in diameter.
2. Stand with your shoulder next to a wall. Place the ball between the side of your head and the wall.
3. Gently push your forehead into the ball.
4. Hold this position for 15 to 20 seconds. Count out loud. Do not hold your breath.
5. Repeat exercise _____ times, _____ times per day.

Note: You can also do this exercise by using your hands in place of the ball; however, this technique may cause some discomfort due to the use of your arms.



CERVICAL SPINE • Extension Strength

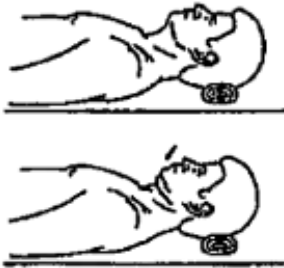
1. Obtain a child's playground ball or towel roll approximately 6 to 8 inches in diameter.
2. Stand erect 12 to 18 inches from a wall. Place the ball between the back of your head and the wall.
3. Gently push your forehead into the ball.
4. Hold this position for 15 to 20 seconds. Count out loud. Do not hold your breath.
5. Repeat exercise _____ times, _____ times per day.

Note: You can also do this exercise by using your hands in place of the ball; however, this technique may cause some discomfort due to the use of your arms.

➤ RANGE OF MOTION AND STRETCHING EXERCISES • Cervical Strain and Sprain

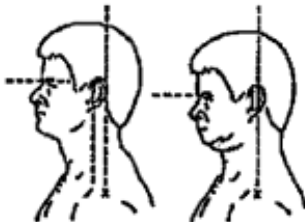
Maintaining a proper posture is the key for most problems/pain related to the neck. The exercises detailed below are presented to help you obtain and maintain good posture. These are some of the *initial* exercises you may start your rehabilitation program with until you see your physician, physical therapist, or athletic trainer again or until your symptoms are resolved. Please remember:

- Flexible tissue is more tolerant of the stresses placed on it during activities.
- Each stretch should be held for 20 to 30 seconds.
- A *gentle* stretching sensation should be felt.



CERVICAL SPINE • Pivots

1. Lie on a firm surface. Roll up a wash cloth or small towel (1 to 3 inches in diameter) and place it directly under your head as shown.
2. Gently tuck your chin down toward the floor.
3. You will feel a stretch on the back of your neck.
4. Hold this position for _____ seconds.
5. Repeat exercise _____ times, _____ times per day.



CERVICAL SPINE • Axial Extension

1. Sit in a chair or stand in your normal posture.
2. Gently tuck your chin and glide your head backward. Keep your eyes level as shown. You should not end up looking up or looking down.
3. You will feel a stretch in the back of your neck and at the top of your shoulders.
4. Hold this position for _____ seconds.
5. Repeat exercise _____ times, _____ times per day.



CERVICAL SPINE • Side Bend

1. Sit in a chair or stand in your normal posture.
2. Gently dip your ear toward your shoulder as shown.
3. Do not turn your head when you do this exercise. You should keep looking forward.
4. You will feel a stretch on the side of your neck.
5. Hold this position for _____ seconds.
6. Repeat exercise _____ times, _____ times per day.



CERVICAL SPINE • Rotation

1. Sit in a chair or stand in your normal posture.
2. Turn your head and look over your shoulder.
3. Keep your head level. Do not dip your ear toward your shoulder when you do this exercise.
4. You will feel a stretch on the side and back of your neck.
5. Hold this position for _____ seconds.
6. Repeat exercise _____ times, _____ times per day.



CERVICAL SPINE • Neck Circles

1. Sit in a chair or stand in your normal posture.
2. Gently circle your head and neck in a clockwise and a counterclockwise direction.
3. Work within your pain free range of motion. Strive to obtain a gentle feeling of stretching and relaxation.
4. Repeat in each direction 5 to 10 times.
5. Repeat exercise _____ times, _____ times per day.