

Neck: Exercises

Your Care Instructions

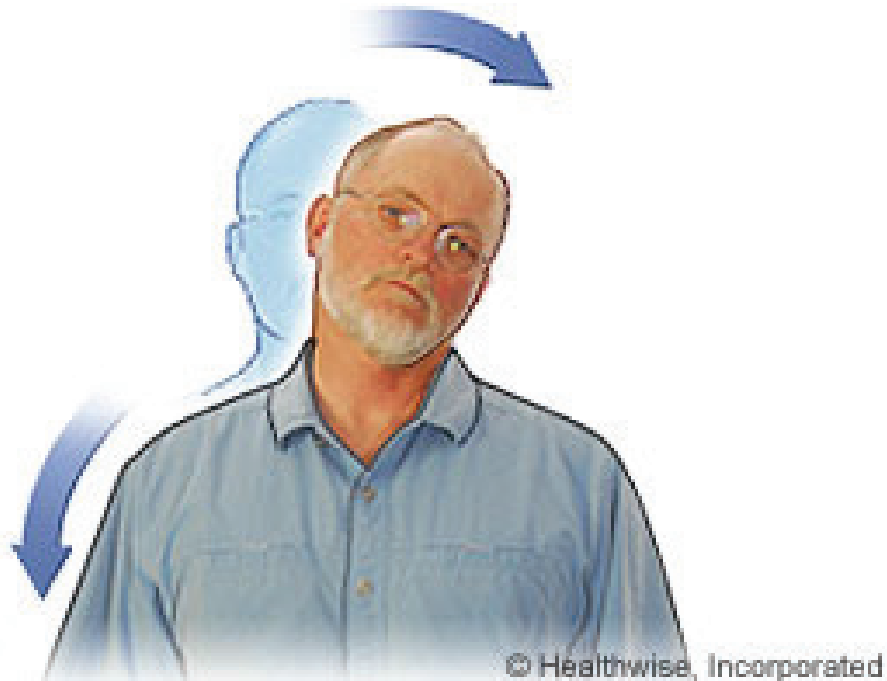
Here are some examples of typical rehabilitation exercises for your condition. Start each exercise slowly. Ease off the exercise if you start to have pain.

Your doctor or physical therapist will tell you when you can start these exercises and which ones will work best for you.

How to do the exercises

Note: Stretching should make you feel a gentle stretch, but no pain. Stop any strengthening exercise that makes pain worse.

Neck stretch



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1. This stretch works best if you keep your shoulder down as you lean away from it. To help you remember to do this, start by relaxing your shoulders and lightly holding on to your thighs or your chair.
2. Tilt your head toward your shoulder and hold for 15 to 30 seconds. Let the weight of your head stretch your muscles.
3. If you would like a little added stretch, use your hand to gently and steadily pull your head toward your shoulder. For example, keeping your right shoulder down, lean your head to the left.

4. Repeat 2 to 4 times toward each shoulder.

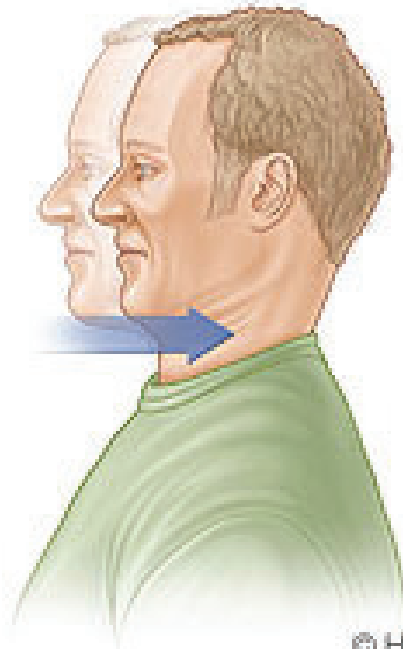
Diagonal neck stretch



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1. Turn your head slightly toward the direction you will be stretching, and tilt your head diagonally toward your chest and hold for 15 to 30 seconds.
2. If you would like a little added stretch, use your hand to gently and steadily pull your head forward on the diagonal.
3. Repeat 2 to 4 times toward each side.

Dorsal glide stretch



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1. Sit or stand tall and look straight ahead.
2. Slowly tuck your chin as you glide your head backward over your body
3. Hold for a count of 6, and then relax for up to 10 seconds.
4. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

Note: The dorsal glide stretches the back of the neck. If you feel pain, do not glide so far back. Some people find this exercise easier to do while lying on their backs with an ice pack on the neck.

Chest and shoulder stretch



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1. Sit or stand tall and glide your head backward as in the dorsal glide stretch.
2. Raise both arms so that your hands are next to your ears.
3. Take a deep breath, and as you breathe out, lower your elbows down and behind your back. You will feel your shoulder blades slide down and together, and at the same time you will feel a stretch across your chest and the front of your shoulders.
4. Hold for about 6 seconds, and then relax for up to 10 seconds.
5. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

Strengthening: Hands on head



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1. Move your head backward, forward, and side to side against gentle pressure from your hands, holding each position for about 6 seconds.
2. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.



Where can you learn more?

Go to <http://www.healthwise.net/ed>

Enter **P975** in the search box to learn more about "**Neck: Exercises**".

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