

Exercises for Chronic Neck Pain

This strengthening and stretching program will help lessen your pain, and get you stronger and more flexible, so you can do the activities you enjoy with less pain and effort. Choose a time of day that best fits your daily routine. Please talk with your primary care provider or physical therapist if you have questions or concerns.

Strengthening

1. Chin tuck for strengthening and stretching neck muscles

- Lie on your back on a bed or a mat on the floor.
- Place a small towel under your head.
- Gently tuck your chin.
- Hold the chin tuck for 2 seconds then relax.

Tips

Bend your knees and put your feet on the bed or mat for more comfort.

Repetitions	Number of Sets	Days per Week
10	3	3 to 5



2. Prone shoulder lifts (3 positions)

- Lie face down on a bed or mat on the floor.
- Place a pillow under your hips.
- Place a towel under your forehead.
- Place your hands at your side.
- Squeeze your shoulder blades together and lift your arms.
- Repeat in each of the 3 positions
 - Hands at hip level
 - Hands at shoulder level (airplane)
 - Hands above your shoulders (superman)



Tip

Lift your hands only 6 inches from the floor.

Repetitions	Number of Sets	Days per Week
10	3	3 to 5

Stretching

1. Upper back stretch

- Sit or stand.
- Lace your fingers together in front of you.
- Look down at your hands and reach toward the floor until a gentle stretch is felt in your upper back.
- Hold it, then go back to the starting position.

Tip

Lower your hands if the stretch is too hard.

Hold	Repetitions	Days per Week
30 seconds	3	Daily



2. Ear to shoulder stretch

- a. Sit or stand.
- b. Gently bring your ear toward your shoulder until a gentle stretch is felt.
- c. Hold it, then go back to the starting position.

Tip

Keep your shoulder down by holding on to the chair if you are sitting or a table if you are standing.

Hold	Repetitions	Days per Week
30 seconds	3	Daily



3. Pectoral stretch (3 positions)

- a. Stand in a doorway and place your hands on each side of the doorway.
- b. For each of the 3 positions, take a small step forward into the doorway until a gentle stretch is felt in the front of your shoulder.
- c. Repeat in each of the 3 positions
 - a. Hands at hip level
 - b. Hands at shoulder level
 - c. Hands above your shoulders

Tip

Keep your back straight and tighten your abdominal muscles.

Hold	Repetitions	Days per Week
30 seconds	3	Daily

