

Information and exercise sheet

Neck pain

Neck pain usually gets better in a few weeks. You can usually treat it yourself at home. It's a good idea to keep your neck moving, as resting too much could make the pain worse.

This sheet includes some exercises to help your neck pain. It's important to carry on exercising, even when the pain goes, as this can reduce the chances of it coming back. Neck pain can also be helped by sleeping on a firm mattress, with your head at the same height as your body, and by sitting upright, with your shoulders and neck back. Don't wear a neck collar unless your doctor tells you to.

Make an appointment with your GP or a physiotherapist if your pain does not improve in a few weeks, or you have other symptoms, such as:

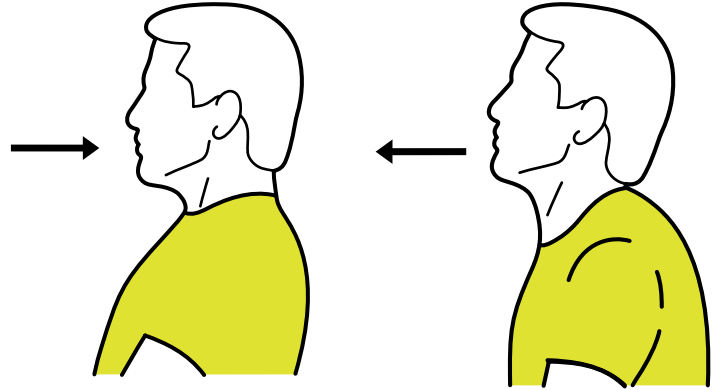
- pins and needles
- weakness or pain in your arm
- a cold arm
- dizziness.

Exercises

Many people find the following exercises helpful. If you need to, adjust the position so that it's comfortable. Try to do these exercises regularly. Do each one a few times to start with, to get used to them, and gradually increase how much you do.

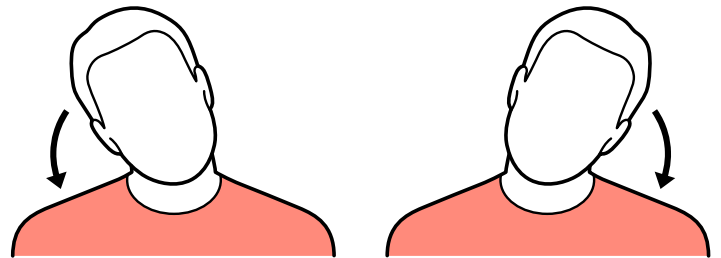
1. Neck stretch

Keeping the rest of the body straight, push your chin forward, so your throat is stretched. Gently tense your neck muscles and hold for 5 seconds. Return your head to the centre and push it backwards, keeping your chin up. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 5 times.



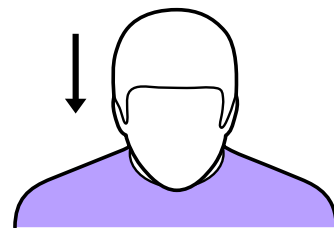
2. Neck tilt (side to side)

Tilt your head down towards one of your shoulders, leading with your ear. Try not to shrug your shoulder. Gently tense your neck muscles and hold for 5 seconds. Return your head to centre and repeat on the opposite side. Repeat 5 times on each side.



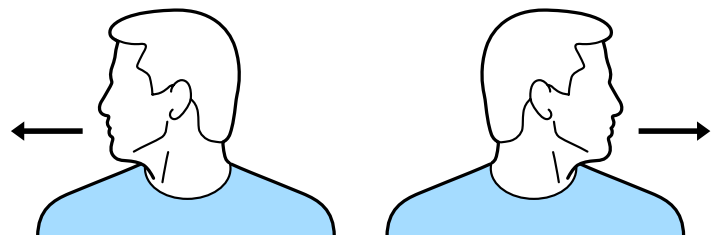
3. Neck tilt down

Sit or stand, with good posture. It's best to sit down if you have trouble balancing. Slowly tilt your head down, to rest your chin on your chest. Gently tense your neck muscles and hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 5 times.



4. Neck turn

Turn your head to one side, keeping your chin at the same height and moving within comfortable limits. Gently tense your neck muscles and hold for 5 seconds. Return your head to the centre and repeat on the opposite side. Repeat 5 times on each side.





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