

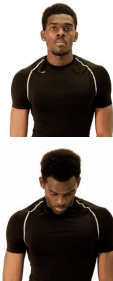
NECK EXTENSION
(to reduce neck stiffness)

In a standing or seated position with your back straight. Slowly tilt your head backwards to look up towards the ceiling. Hold and return the head back to the starting position.



NECK FLEXION
(to reduce neck stiffness)

In a standing or seated position, keep your back straight and slowly bring your chin down towards your chest. Hold for a couple of seconds and then return to the starting position.



NECK SIDE FLEXION
(to reduce neck stiffness)

In a standing or seated position, keep your back straight and slowly side bend your neck to the right, hold for a couple of seconds and then slowly bend your neck to the left.



UPPER BACK ROTATION
(to reduce upper back stiffness)

In a seated position with your back straight, wrap your arms around your body. Slowly turn your body as far round to the left as you are able. Slowly return to the starting position and then turn your body to the right.



UPPER LIMB NERVE STRETCH

In a standing position with your shoulders rolled forwards, your chin on your chest and your arms rotated inwards. Move slowly and carefully to bring your neck and shoulder back and outwards as shown.



Exercises kindly supplied by www.exerciseprescriber.com

Top tips

- Use good manual handling techniques and seek advice on relevant training.
- Complete a work station assessment if your job is desk based.
- Use the correct tools to do your job correctly and safely.
- Take regular "mini" breaks where possible to stretch and move around.
- Don't over stretch to do the task – move closer to the task/object to make it easier and safer for you.
- Avoid awkward and uncomfortable positions such as:
 - Over-reaching
 - Looking down and keeping your chin tucked into your chest for prolonged periods
 - Slumped or twisted postures
 - Standing or sitting with your shoulders rounded
- Avoid using too much force for a task, which can cause unwanted stress or strain on muscles and joints.
- Avoid placing too much strain on one side of your body. Try to alternate the side on which you perform a task (this may take a bit of getting used to!).
- General upper limb problems usually ease within 2 weeks and should recover in 4-6 weeks. However, if the symptoms persist or worsen after 2 weeks seek medical advice from either a Chartered physiotherapist or your doctor.



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CRACKING ADVICE FOR NECK & ARM PAIN



*Some top tips to help avoid injury
or speed up your recovery*



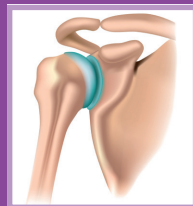
Provided By FitBack Physiotherapy

This leaflet has been designed to provide education and advice to help manage neck and arm pain. It is not intended to be a replacement for more detailed medical advice. If you are experiencing any musculoskeletal pain which does not improve within 2 weeks you are advised to seek further advice from your GP or physiotherapist.

The idea that manual handling or repetitive movement is “bad for you” is a myth. **But**, it is true that active work if carried out incorrectly can sometimes contribute to health conditions such as joint injuries, muscular aches and strains and non-specific arm pain. This is also true for people who spend most their working day sat at their desk with poor posture. Non-specific arm pain is a term commonly used to describe some types of pain in the fingers, wrists, forearms, shoulders and neck. Sometimes pain felt in the arm can originate from the neck so by improving posture and neck movements, arm pain may improve. Often problems will improve within 2 weeks but this leaflet gives you some advice and exercises to help avoid symptoms at work or to help speed up your recovery.

The shoulder

The shoulder is the most mobile joint in the body. The main shoulder joint is a ball-and socket joint, which allows a large range of movement. The joint is surrounded by a tough fibrous capsule, which helps to hold the joint together. A group of four muscles and their tendons make up the rotator cuff, which help to control the movement of the shoulder and help to keep the joint stable. There is another smaller joint where the top of the shoulder blade meets the collarbone.



The neck

There are 7 bones that form the neck which are called the cervical vertebrae. The joints and muscles around the neck allow you to move your head in all directions. Between the bones are discs of cartilage known as intervertebral discs. Nerves branch out between each disc and carry sensation and pain signals to the brain. The bones help to support the head and protect the spinal cord.



Do you work in an office and spend most of your day sat down or do you work on a production line? Do postures like these below look familiar?



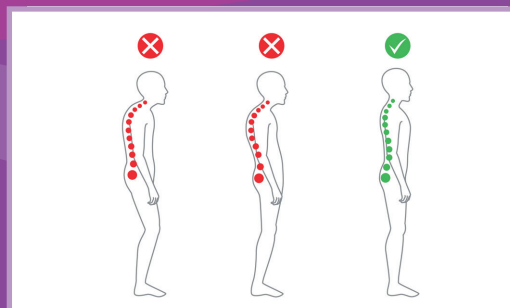
Adopting postures like these for prolonged periods of time can cause tight muscles, stiff joints and nerve irritation around the neck, shoulders and arms. This can in turn lead to pain, reduced movement and reduced ability to perform your day to day tasks.

The good news is that by following the advice and simple exercises in this leaflet you can improve your posture which will help you to avoid symptoms or help speed up your recovery. If you usually work in a bent over posture like the ones above, try to work more on the “extension” exercises at the end of this leaflet. These include; neck extension, shoulder abduction and the nerve stretch exercises.

Posture

Adopt good working postures as much as possible:

- Adjust the height of your working surface if possible, to make it more comfortable to work at.
- Stand and sit upright and avoid stooping forwards where possible.
- Move regularly and avoid sitting for long periods
- Keep your arms close to your body when lifting.
- Keep your shoulders back and relaxed.
- Keep your feet approximately hip distance apart if lifting heavier objects.
- Move your feet closer to the task/object.



Easy effective exercises

The following exercises should be performed slowly and carefully, within your pain limits. Try to do each exercise 10 times, 2-3 times a day. Please stop them if you experience any increase in pain or any symptoms such as dizziness and inform your GP or a physiotherapist. The exercises can be used to help keep the muscles and joints in your neck, shoulders and upper back healthy, to help improve your posture and movement and reduce pain following an injury.

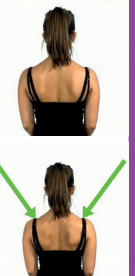
PENDULUM EXERCISE (to reduce shoulder stiffness)

From a standing position, bend forwards and support yourself with one hand on a table or chair. Allow the opposite arm to hang freely down towards the floor and keep the elbow straight. Gently move your arm in a small circular motion gradually increasing the size of the circle. Repeat with the opposite arm if required.



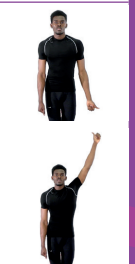
SHOULDER BLADE ‘SETTING’ (to improve posture)

In a seated position, with your arms relaxed and resting on your thighs. Gently bring the shoulder blades back and down. The only movement should come from the shoulder blades moving together in a diagonal direction, there should be no movement from the shoulders and arms. Hold this position for 10 seconds. Repeat 10 times, 3 times a day.



SHOULDER ABDUCTION (to reduce shoulder stiffness)

In a standing or seated position with your back straight, lift your arm out to the side with the thumb leading the movement. Take the arm as high as possible and then slowly return back to your side. Repeat on the other arm if required.



NECK ROTATION (to reduce neck stiffness)

In a standing or seated position, keep your back straight and slowly turn your head towards your right shoulder; hold for a couple of seconds and then slowly turn the head towards the left.

