

## COMMON CAUSES OF NECK PAIN

**Sprain:** Ligaments and/or muscles are torn and/or stretched.

**Herniated disc:** A slipped disc can pinch a nerve and cause neck and/or arm pain.

**Osteoarthritis:** “Wear and tear” arthritis increases as you age.

**Muscle spasms:** Muscles (or a group of muscles) tighten and contract, pulling on themselves and/or structures.

## FACTORS THAT CAN LEAD TO (OR AGGRAVATE) A BAD NECK

**Poor posture and/or bad positioning.** Practice good posture whether you’re standing, sitting, or moving.

**Stress.** Practice relaxation techniques like deep breathing and yoga.

**Inappropriate lifting.** Bend your knees and use your legs to lift heavy objects.

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*Providing multi-disciplinary services that include neurological surgery, pain medicine, neurology, neuromuscular medicine, and rehabilitation medicine. Our goal is to get you feeling well again.*

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## Weill Cornell Brain and Spine Center

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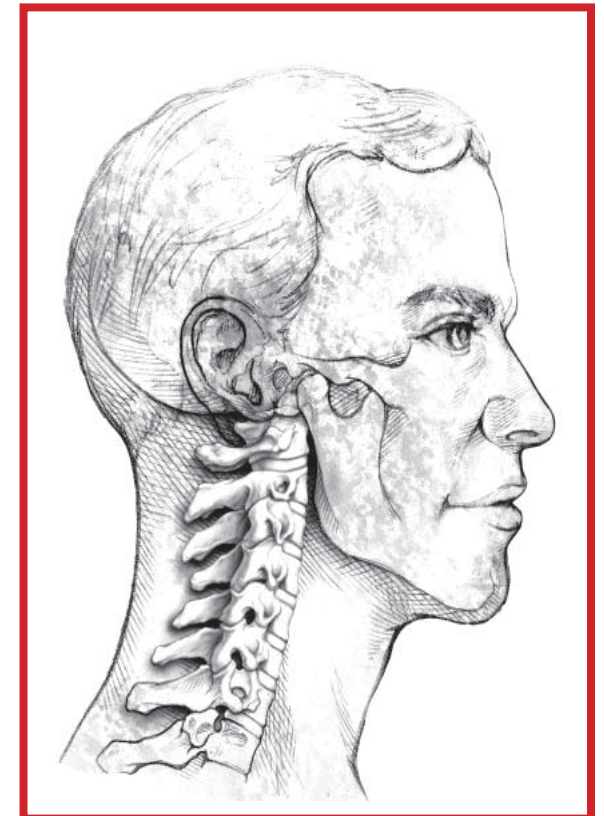
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# YOUR GUIDE TO A BETTER NECK



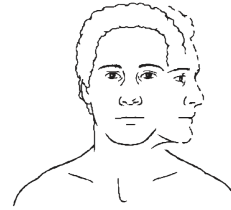
## NECK EXERCISE GUIDELINES

Stretching exercises are an important part of treatment to relieve discomfort in your neck. They help restore motion and relieve the pain associated with stiffness. These exercises are more effective when performed in the shower or following application of hot, moist towels. Moist heat relieves pain by increasing blood flow to the muscles of your neck.

- Start doing one of each exercise per day.
- Stop if you feel fatigued or if the exercise causes you pain.
- As your condition improves, increase with one more each day until you are doing 10 of each exercise per day.
- They may be done intermittently during the day to help relax and relieve tension of the neck and shoulder muscles.
- Take an exercise break during your workday.
- If you work at a desk, perform exercise number 7 every one to two hours during the workday.

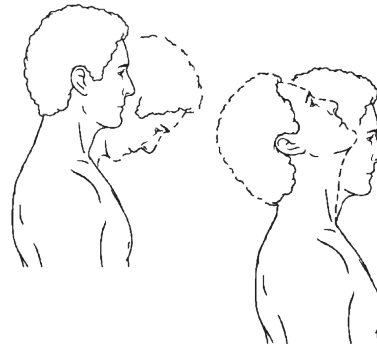
## TO BE DONE IN THE SHOWER

- Stand erect. Turn head slowly as far as possible to the right.
- Return to normal center position and relax.
- Turn head slowly as far as possible to the left.
- Return to normal center position and relax.



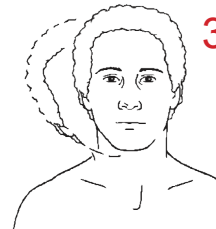
1

- Stand erect. Try to touch your chin to your chest.
- Tilt your head backwards, looking up to the ceiling, slowly.



2

- Stand erect. Try to touch left ear to left shoulder.
- Return to normal center position and relax.
- Try to touch your right ear to your right shoulder.
- Return to normal center position and relax.



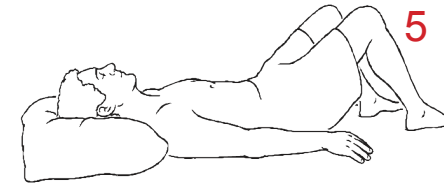
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- Stand erect. Raise both shoulders as close to your ears as possible and hold as you count to five.
- Relax.
- Stretch your shoulders backward as far as possible.
- Hold, then relax.



4

## TWICE A DAY, AFTER A HOT SHOWER



5

- Lie on your back with knees flexed, with a small pillow under your neck.
- Take a deep breath slowly, fully expanding your chest.
- Exhale slowly. (Repeat ten times)



6

- Lie on your stomach with your hands clasped behind your back.
- Pull shoulders back and down by pushing your hands toward your feet, pinch shoulder blades together and lift your head from the floor.
- Take a deep breath and hold for two seconds.
- Relax.

## EVERY TWO HOURS DURING THE WORK DAY, IF YOU WORK AT A DESK

7

- Stand erect and look upward.
- Take a deep breath, rise on the balls of your feet, and pinch your shoulder blades together while pulling your shoulders down.
- Hold momentarily, then exhale slowly and relax.

