

EXERCISES FOR THE PAINFUL NECK AND SHOULDER

General Information:

Perform only those exercises recommended by your doctor. Do not overdo exercising, especially in the beginning. Start by trying the movements slowly and carefully.

Don't be alarmed if an exercise causes some mild discomfort which lasts a few minutes. However, stop doing any exercise that aggravates pre-existing pain (unless instructed to do so by your doctor). If the pain is more than mild and lasts more than 15 or 20 minutes, do no further exercises until you see your doctor.

Isotonic Exercises (contraction with movement):

These exercises will restore movement to the injured area, as well as help relieve pain associated with stiffness. (Exercises 1 to 4: neck; exercises 5 and 6: neck and shoulder; exercises 7 and 8: shoulder.)

Isometric Exercises (contraction without movement):

These exercises will help restore and maintain muscle strength to the injured neck or shoulder. Do not hold your breath while doing an isometric exercise; breathe out vigorously as you strain during the exercises. (Exercises 9 to 12: neck; exercises 13 and 14: shoulder.)

Moist Heat (during or before exercise):

Moist heat will help relieve pain by increasing the blood flow to the muscles. You can often increase the effectiveness of isotonic exercises by performing the in a hot shower, after a hot shower, or following the application of hot, moist towels. However, in some injuries, and especially during the first day after an injury occurs, you may obtain added relief from pain by the application of cold instead.

Do the following exercises _____ times a day:

- 1-4 5-6 7-8
 9-12 13-14 Other _____

Take the medication prescribed for you _____ times

daily for _____

TWO-WEEK DIARY

Medication for relief of muscle pain/spasm	1st Week							2nd Week						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	a.m.													
	noon													
	p.m.													
	p.m.													
Prescribed exercises														

HOW TO BE KIND TO YOUR NECK AND SHOULDERS

Sitting:

Keep your chin tucked in (not up) and your neck drawn back. Use a hard chair with support arms. Do not slouch; keep the entire length of your spine up against the back of the chair. Use the arms of the chair to support your arms, which will help prevent undue strain on the neck due to forward thrust.



Standing:

Keep your chin tucked in (not up) and your neck drawn back. Also try to stand with your upper back flat. Never bend over without bending your knees; this will better enable you to keep your neck and shoulders drawn back and erect.

Sleeping:

Do not sleep on your stomach. The preferable way to sleep is on your side. Maintain your neck and head in a normal position by adjusting your pillow accordingly (see illustration), and keep your arms down.

If you prefer to sleep on your back, put your pillow under your neck as xxxxx as your head. The pillow should support the neck and head in a neutral position. Avoid extension of the neck.

It is advisable to use a bed board or firm orthopedic mattress. You may also use a contoured pillow, instead of trying to manipulate a regular pillow under your neck.



Relaxing:

Do not lie on a sofa to watch television. Use a firm armchair. Do not use soft, fluffy pillows to prop up your head while reading.

Driving:

Sit high in the car. Your seat (preferably hard) should not be too far back or too low so that you will not have to stretch up and forward to see over the steering wheel. You may find a polyurethane pad of value in helping to provide support; it should be 1 to 2 inches thick, as wide as your back, and high enough to reach your shoulders.

Lifting or reaching:

Bend your knees and use your leg muscles to lift. Avoid sudden movements. Keep the load close to your body and try not to lift anything higher than your waist. If you have to reach for a shelf higher than your head, stand on a stool. Try to avoid reaching or looking up for any length of time.



Working:

Do not overwork yourself. If you work at a desk all day, get up and move around whenever you get a chance. It may be advisable to do a set or two of your exercises during a break from work.

Self-massage:

Massaging the neck and shoulders muscles often relaxes them and also serves to relieve tension and reduce spasm.

Exercise:

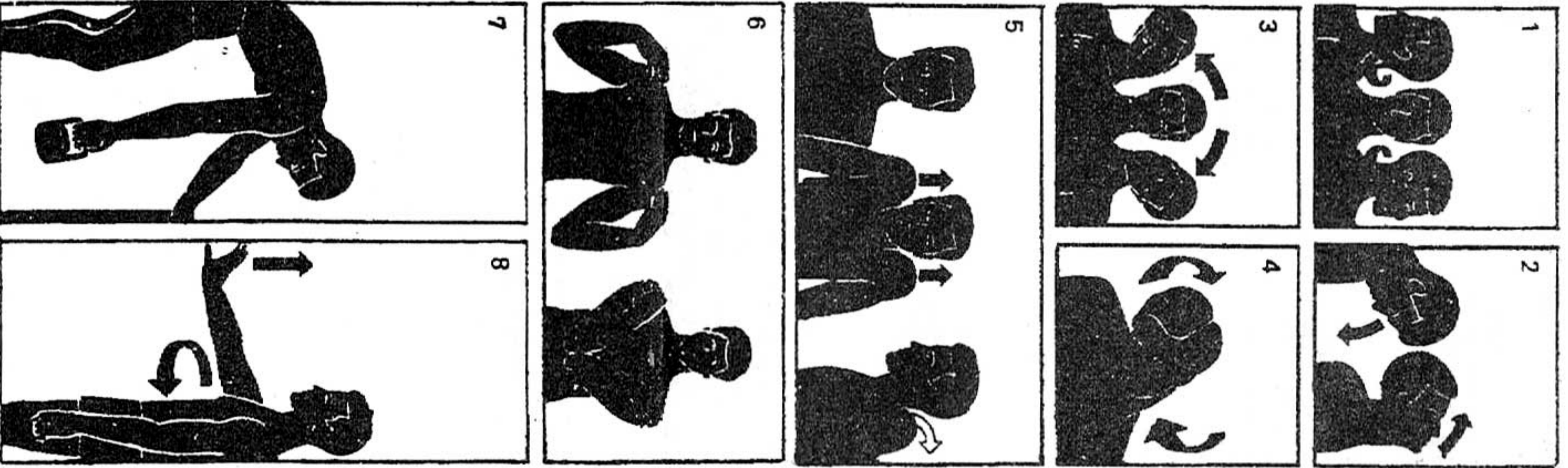
Get regular exercise (vigorous walking, bicycling, swimming, etc.) once your pain is gone. But always start slowly to give your muscles a chance to warm up before attempting anything strenuous.

See your doctor:

If your neck or shoulder acts up . . . if the pain gets worse . . . see your doctor; don't wait until your condition gets too severe.

ISOTONIC EXERCISES

- Stand or sit erect with chin tucked in close to chest. Turn head slowly to right, trying to bring your chin over your right shoulder. Hold for three seconds; rotate head back to center position. Pause. Repeat in opposite direction. Repeat entire sequence 5 times.
- Push chin downward, trying to touch it to your chest, without causing too much strain. Pause. Slowly lift head backward as far as possible without straining. Pause. Repeat 5 times.
- Bend your head slowly to the right, trying to bring your right ear to your right shoulder. Pause. Return slowly to center position. Repeat in opposite direction. Repeat sequence 5 times.
- Roll your head clockwise in as wide a circle as possible up, to the right, down, to the left for three complete circles. Do the same in the opposite direction (counterclockwise). Pause. Repeat sequence 3 times.
- Shoulder shrug: Stand erect, arms held loosely at sides. Breathe deeply as you lift your shoulder's first as high and then as far back as they will move. Breathe out as you lower your shoulders to the starting position and relax. Repeat 20 times, at least twice a day. Build up this routine to 50 times, twice a day.
- Upper back stretch: Sit erect. Place hands on shoulders. Try to cross your elbows by bringing your right arm to the left and left arm to the right, until you feel the stretch across your upper back. Return to starting position, drop your hands and relax. Repeat 10 times.
- Pendular exercise: Hold a 1-to 2-pound weight in your hand. Bending knees slightly, bend forward at waist and hold onto a table with other hand. Allow your arm to dangle freely. (A) Swing arm laterally across body (to the right and left) for 1 minute, keeping your elbow perfectly straight. (B) Then swing arm backward and forward for 1 minute. (C) Then swing arm in a gradually increasing circle clockwise for 1 minute. (D) And finally, repeat (C) counterclockwise.
- Climbing-the-wall exercise: Face the wall, fingers up the wall as high as you can go. (Do not shrug or hunch your shoulder or tilt the upper half of your body.) Repeat 10 times, each time trying to "walk" a little higher. Turn your body slightly and repeat 10 times. Continue gradually turning your body and repeating the exercise until you are at a right angle to the wall. Perform this exercise for 10 minutes, 2 or 3 times a day.



ISOMETRIC EXERCISES

- Resisted flexion (neck): Stand or sit erect. Place one hand on top of the other on your forehead. Push your head forward against the heel of your hand, without moving your head. Hold for a count of 10 (approx. 7 seconds). Relax. Repeat 3 times.
- Resisted extension (neck): Stand or sit erect. Clasp your hands behind your head—not your neck. Push your head backward against the resisting hands, without moving your head. Hold for a count of 10 (approx. 7 seconds). Relax. Repeat 3 times.
- Resisted side-bend: Stand or sit erect. Place your right hand on the right side of your face. Push your head sideward against your hand, without moving your head. Hold for a count of 10 (approx. 7 seconds). Relax. Repeat in opposite direction (i.e. left hand on left side of face). Repeat sequence 3 times.
- Resisted rotation: Stand or sit erect. Place your right hand on right temple and your left hand on the left side of the back of your head (your hands should be diagonally opposite). Attempt to look over your right shoulder, resisting the movement of your head with your hands. Hold for a count of 10 (approx. 7 seconds). Relax. Repeat in opposite direction, with left hand on left temple, etc. Relax. Repeat sequence 3 times.
- Resisted flexion (shoulder): Stand or sit erect. Raise both forearms in front of body, parallel to ground, with elbows bent. Intertwine fingers and pull. Hold for a count of 7 (approx. 5 seconds). Relax. Repeat 3 times.
- Resisted extension (shoulder): Stand or sit erect. Raise both forearms in front of body, parallel to ground, with elbows bent. Place both palms flat against each other and press. Hold for a count of 7 (approx. 5 seconds). Relax. Repeat 3 times.

