

THE SPORTS MEDICINE PATIENT ADVISOR

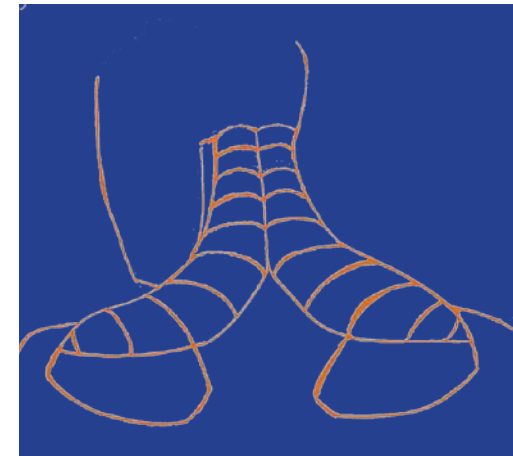


NECK STRAIN

Neck Strain

Neck Exercises

NECK STRAIN



What is neck strain?

A strain is a tear of a muscle or tendon. Your neck is surrounded by small muscles, which run close to the vertebrae, and larger muscles, which make up the visible muscles of the neck.

How does it occur?

Neck strains most often occur when the head and neck are forcibly moved, such as in a whiplash injury or from contact in sports.

What are the symptoms?

You have pain in your neck. When the neck muscles go into spasm you feel hard, tight muscles in your neck that are very tender to the touch. You have pain when you move your head to either side or when you try to move your head up or down. The spasming muscles can cause headaches.

How is it diagnosed?

Your health care provider will examine your neck. Your neck muscles will be tender and tight. You may have pain over the bones in your neck. Your health care provider may order x-rays to make sure the vertebrae are not injured.

How is it treated?

Right after the injury you should place an ice pack on your neck for 20 to 30 minutes every 3 or 4 hours for 2 to 3 days or until the pain goes away. Your healthcare provider may prescribe an anti-inflammatory medication and a neck collar to support your neck and prevent further injury.

If you still have neck pain several days after the injury and after using ice, your health care provider may recommend using moist heat on your neck. You can buy a moist-heat pad or make your own by soaking towels in hot water. You should apply moist heat to your neck for 20 to 30 minutes every 3 or 4 hours until the pain goes away. You may find that it helps to alternate putting heat and ice on your neck.

How long will the effects last?

Most people recover from neck strains in a few days to a few weeks, but some people take longer to get better.

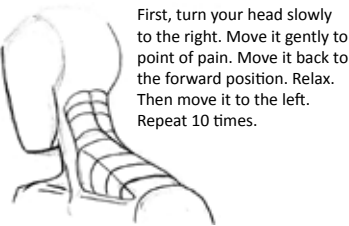
Neck Strain

Neck Exercises

Neck Exercises

1. Neck Rotation

Sit in a chair, keeping your neck, shoulders, and trunk straight.



First, turn your head slowly to the right. Move it gently to point of pain. Move it back to the forward position. Relax. Then move it to the left. Repeat 10 times.

2. Neck Side Bend

Tilt your head so that your right ear moves toward your right shoulder. Move it to the point of pain.



Then tilt your head so your left ear moves toward your left shoulder. Make sure you do not rotate your head while tilting or raise your shoulder your head. Repeat this exercise 10 times in each direction.

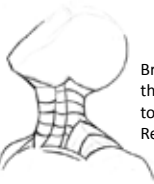
3. Neck Flexion

Bend your head forward, reaching your chin toward your chest. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times.



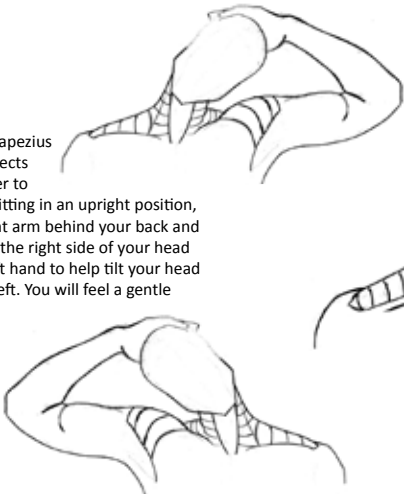
4. Neck Extension

Bring your head back so that your chin is pointing toward the ceiling. Repeat 10 times.



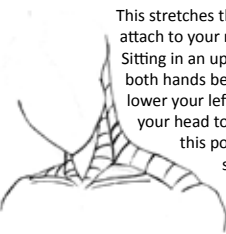
5. Upper Trapezius Stretch

The upper trapezius muscle connects your shoulder to your head. Sitting in an upright position, put your right arm behind your back and gently grasp the right side of your head with your left hand to help tilt your head toward the left. You will feel a gentle stretch on your right side. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds. Repeat 3 times on each side.

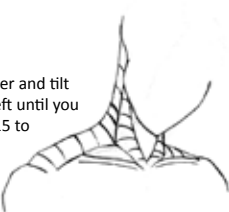


6. Scalene Stretch

This stretches the neck muscles that attach to your ribs. Sitting in an upright position, clasp both hands behind your back, lower your left shoulder, and tilt your head toward the right. Hold this position for 15 to 30 seconds and then come back to the starting position.

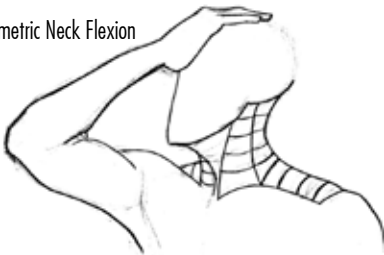


Lower your right shoulder and tilt your head toward the left until you feel a stretch. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds. Repeat 3 times on each side.



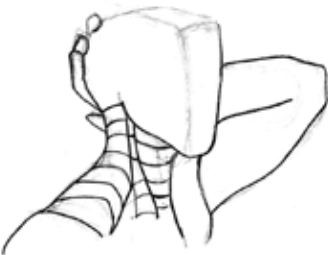
7. Isometric Neck Flexion

Sit tall, eyes straight ahead, and chin level. Place your palm against your forehead and gently push your forehead into your palm. Hold for 5 seconds and release. DO 3 sets of 5.



8. Isometric Neck Extension

Clasp your hand together and place them behind your head. Press the back of your head into your palm. Hold 5 seconds and release. Do 3 sets of 5.



9. Isometric Neck Side Bend

Place the palm of your hand at the side of your temple and press your temple into the palm of your hand. Hold 5 seconds and release. Do 3 sets of 5 on each side.



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Hand drawn artwork
Illustrator
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InDesign