

Computer and Desk Stretches

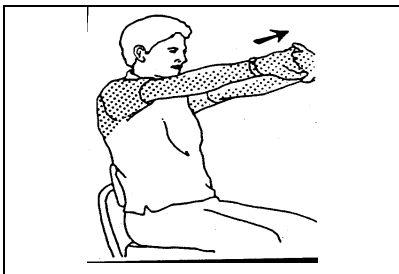
Prolonged sitting at a desk or computer terminal can cause muscular tension and pain. But, by taking a 5 or 10 minute break to do a series of stretches, your whole body can feel better. It is also helpful to learn to stretch spontaneously, throughout the day, stretching any particular part of the body that feels tense for a minute or two. This will help in reducing and controlling unwanted tension and pain.

How to stretch

Stretching should be done slowly without bouncing. Stretch to where you feel a slight, easy stretch. Hold this feeling for 5-20 seconds. As you hold this stretch, the feeling of tension should diminish. If it doesn't, just ease off slightly in a more comfortable stretch. The easy stretch reduces tension and readies the tissues for the developmental stretch.

After holding the easy stretch, you can move a fraction further into the stretch until you feel mild tension again. This is the developmental stretch, which should be held for 15-20 seconds. This feeling of stretch tension should also slightly diminish or stay the same. If the tension increases or becomes painful, you are overstretching. Ease off a bit to a comfortable stretch. The developmental stretch reduces tension and will safely increase flexibility.

Hold only stretch tensions that feel good to you. The key to stretching is to be relaxed while you concentrate on the area being stretched. Your breathing should be slow, deep and rhythmical. Don't worry about how far you can stretch. Limberness will become just one of the many by-products of regular stretching.



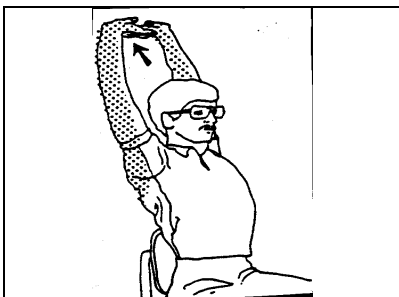
Interlace fingers then straighten arms out in front of you, palms facing outwards. Feel the stretch in the arms and through the upperarms to shoulderblades.



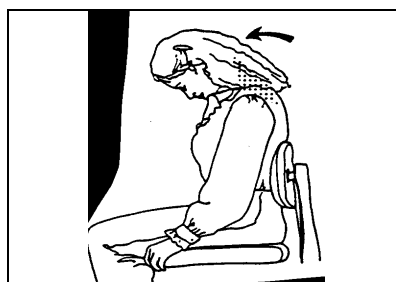
Sitting upright with good lower back support, clasp hands together with arms straight above the head. Keeping arms straight take them backwards to stretch shoulders and upper back.



Hold your arm just above the elbow and pull toward opposite shoulder. Look over shoulder of arm that is being stretched. Do both sides, holding for 15-20 seconds.



Interlace fingers then turn palms upwards above your head as you straighten your arms. Feel a stretch through arms and upper sides of ribcage when elongating stretch.



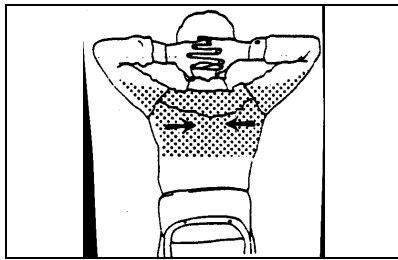
Gently tilt your head forward to stretch the back of the neck. Hold when tension is felt – do not stretch to the point of pain.



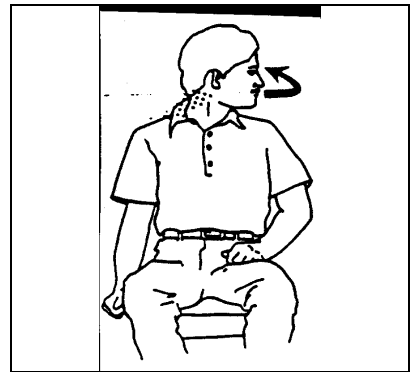
Sit with left leg bent over right leg, then rest elbow or forearm of right arm on the outside of the upper thigh of the left leg. Apply controlled, steady pressure toward the right with the elbow. As you do this look over your left shoulder to get the stretch feeling. Do both sides – hold 15 seconds



Sitting upright, drop shoulders into a relaxed position. Let arms hang loosely. Gently shake wrist and arms to the count of 5.



With fingers interlaced behind head, keep elbows straight out to the side with upper body straightened.



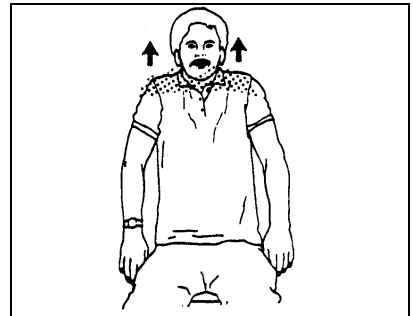
With slight chin tuck, turn head to one side then the other. Hold for the count of 5 on each turn.



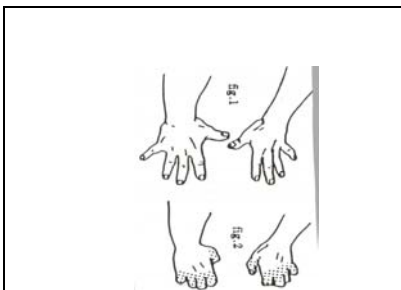
This stretch may cause people around you to think you are very strange, but you often find a lot of tension in your face from eye strain. Raise your eyebrows and open your eyes as wide as possible. At the same time, open your mouth the stretch the muscles around your nose and chin and stick your tongue out.



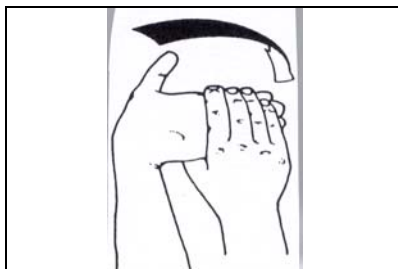
Sitting upright hold onto seat with one hand. You can place a hand on top head and gently tip head to the side. Stretch both sides.



Raise the top of your shoulders toward your ears until you feel slight tension in your neck and shoulders. Hold for 3-5 seconds.



Separate and straighten out your fingers until tension of a stretch is felt. Hold for seconds. Relax, then bend your fingers at the knuckles and hold for 10 seconds.



Hold one arm straight out in front. Hold the front of the fingers with the other hand. Keeping fingers straight, bend the wrist back until a definite gentle stretch is felt in the forearm and wrist.



Hold elbow with other hand, then gently pull behind head until an easy tension/stretch is felt in shoulder or back of upper arm. Do not overstretch – do both sides



Rest one elbow on the desktop with the thumb of this hand nearest you. Resting the other hand on the back of the first hand bend the first hand forward until a definite gentle stretch is felt over the back of the wrist.



Hold onto your lower leg just below the knee. Gently pull bent leg toward our chest. To isolate a stretch in the side of the upper leg, use your arms to pull the bent leg across the body and toward the opposite shoulder.