

Exercise Prescription: Seated Neck Extension

Purpose of Exercise:

This is a self-treatment for acute neck pain and can also be used in the prevention of neck pain.

Frequency:

6-8 times per day or about once every 2 hours.

Starting Position:

Sit up straight on a chair or stool. A rolled towel or support may be placed behind the low back to help maintain a good spinal position.

Exercise Description:

Tuck your chin and slowly move your head straight backward as far as you can manage into the retracted position (2). Without allowing your neck to move forward, lift your head up and tilt your head backward (3).

With your head tilted back as far as possible, rotate your head to the left and right, while attempting to extend your head even farther back (6-8). After 2-3 seconds of this, return to the starting position.

Repeat this motion 10 times per session and try to progressively increase the extension movement to your maximal range.

If pain/discomfort is felt at the base of the neck, you may reach behind the neck with the hands, taking up tissue slack as shown. This should reduce this discomfort.

Remember that some minor new pains are normal and expected. If the pain becomes worse with each repetition (intensifies or spreads from your neck to shoulder or farther down your arm), discontinue the exercise.

Pictures:



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