

Body Language

A Ten Minute Guide to a Healthier Neck

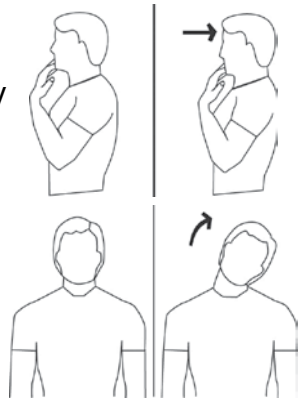
Welcome to O'Connor Hospital! We are dedicated to providing comprehensive, excellent healthcare that is attentive to the whole person: body, mind and spirit. Understanding how your body works and learning to "listen" to your body can decrease pain and help you stay active. The Body Language courses are designed to assist you in this process.

There are hundreds of exercises that can be used to strengthen and improve the flexibility and endurance of the neck muscles. These exercises have been selected because they are effective, easy to do and focus on important muscular structures. As you perform these exercises, you will feel some stretching, but it should not be painful. If you are experiencing pain, check with your physician or physical therapist before continuing to do these exercises.

This exercise routine will take about 10 minutes to complete. A brief walk or aerobic activity is a good warm-up.

Chin Tucks

Keeping the trunk straight with index finger on the chin, gently push the chin back tucking the chin in. Avoid looking up or down while doing this exercise. A slight stretch may be felt in back of the neck. Hold this position for a few seconds and repeat several times.



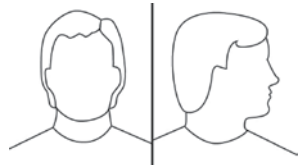
Upper Trapezius Stretch

In a sitting or standing position with the shoulders level, bend the head to one side bringing the ear toward the shoulder until you feel a stretch in the opposite side. Hold this position for a few seconds.



Scalene Muscle Stretch

In a sitting position, with the shoulders level and the trunk straight, tuck the chin in slightly and bend the head to one side until a stretch is felt in the back and toward the side of the neck. Hold this position for 5-10 seconds and on each side. Repeat 2-3 times.



Cervical Spine / Neck Rotation

Keeping the shoulders level and the trunk straight, turn the head to one side. Avoid looking up or down while turning. Hold this position for a few seconds and repeat on the other side. Do this exercise for 10-15 repetitions.



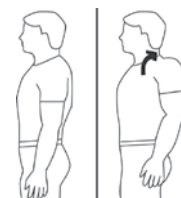
Scapular Squeezes

In a sitting or standing position with the trunk straight, chin tucked and the shoulders level, squeeze the shoulder blades together bringing the shoulders slightly back. Hold this position for a few seconds and repeat several times.



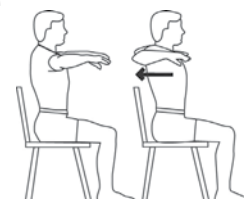
Shoulder Elevation / Shoulder Rolls

In a sitting or standing position slowly shrug the shoulders up and back holding for a few seconds. Slowly return to the original position. Repeat the same exercise several times.



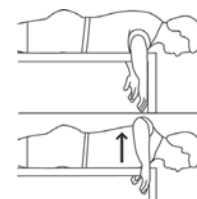
Chin Tucks with Scapular Squeezes - Sitting

Position the arms at the sides or at shoulder level, tuck the chin in and slowly squeeze the shoulder blades together. Make sure the back is in an upright position with the stomach muscles tight. Hold the position a few seconds and repeat several times.



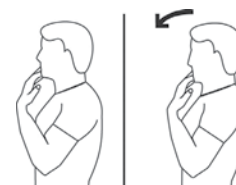
Chin Tucks with Scapular Squeezes - Prone

Lying on the stomach with the head and shoulders off the edge of the bed or mat, tuck the chin in and squeeze the shoulder blades together. Hold the position for a few seconds and repeat several times.



Chin Tucks with Head Nods

Tuck the chin in and gently nod the head down slightly to strengthen the small muscles in the neck. Keep the trunk upright with the stomach muscles tight. Repeat this exercise several times.



Neck exercises involve good stabilization techniques of both the neck and the trunk. Good upright position of the upper trunk, as well as stabilization of the stomach and back muscles, is important while performing these exercises.

Daily use of this program, even when the neck muscles feel good, will help keep them healthy and strong. Regular physical activity is recommended to compliment this neck care program.

From 101: Take 101 to 880 South. Take the Bascom Avenue exit. Turn left on Bascom. Turn right on Naglee (which becomes Forest). The hospital is located at 2105 Forest Avenue.

From 280 North: Take 280 to 880 North. Take the West San Carlos exit. Turn left on Di Salvo and you will see the hospital, which is located at 2105 Forest Avenue.

From 280 South: Take 280 to 880 North. Take the Bascom Avenue South exit. Turn right on Naglee (which becomes Forest). The hospital is located at 2105 Forest Avenue.

Parking: Long-term parking is available behind the hospital. Short-term parking is available in front of the hospital. Free valet parking is available for our guests.

Bus Routes: Lines 23 and 36

