

Stop, stretch and check!

Want to prevent neck, shoulder, back and arm pain, reduce fatigue and improve your concentration? Then develop the healthy habit of doing these stretches regularly – every hour, if possible.

These easy exercises are designed so you can do them at your workstation and if you use them regularly you'll reduce the likelihood of injury. Try to stretch and exercise all body parts in order to reduce muscle fatigue and improve blood flow and flexibility.

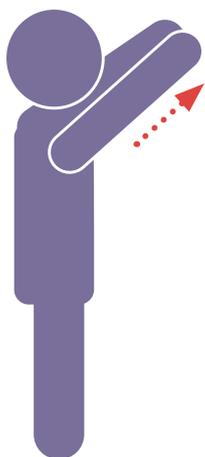
DO

- hold the stretch or repeat as indicated on the diagrams and do each side (where applicable)
- stop if you feel any discomfort

DON'T

- over-stretch – it's best to relax and do the exercises gently
- try these exercises if you have an injury.

Always consult your doctor or physiotherapist first.



WRIST STRETCH

Interlace fingers, palms outward, and straighten arms in front.

Hold for 10 seconds and repeat several times.

Check ARM, WRIST and HAND posture

- While typing, keep your wrist straight whilst your fingers are suspended over the keyboard. This may mean retracting the 'legs' on your keyboard.
- Keep elbows in close to your sides (not splayed outwards) and your forearms parallel with the desk. This may mean adjusting the chair (or desk) height.

- Try to sit up straight in your chair with your shoulders back.
- Rest your hands on the desk or on your lap between periods of typing.
- Type gently (don't 'hammer' the keys) and try not to grip the mouse too hard when using it.
- Try not to use the mouse too much (use hotkeys) and let go of the mouse when you are not using it.



BACK ARCH – SITTING

Clasp hands and stretch, palms up, towards the ceiling. Allow the backrest to support you as you gently stretch backwards.

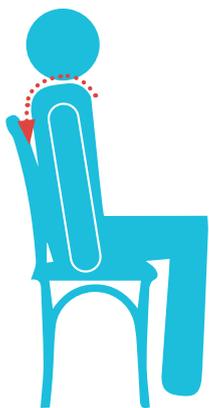
Repeat as often as is needed.

Check BACK posture and support

- Sit well back in your chair – if your feet need support, use a footrest.
- Adjust the height of the back rest on your chair to support your lower back – the bulge in the back support should sit in the small of your back.
- Adjust the angle of your back support to a fairly upright position and pull your chair in close to your workstation to ensure you are sitting up straight.
- Swivel your chair to allow you to directly face any task you're performing – **don't twist your back!**

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Stop, s-t-r-e-t-c-h and check!...continued



SHOULDER ROLLS

Circle shoulders backwards. Hold for 5 seconds, repeat several times.

Repeat every hour.

Check SHOULDER posture

- Relax your shoulders and rest your hands on your lap when you do not need to access anything on your workstation.
- Bend your elbows to approximately 90 degrees and keep your forearms parallel with the desk.
- If the work (keyboard or desk) is higher

than your hands you may be “hunching” or “shrugging” your shoulders unnecessarily. If so, raise your chair height or lower your desk height and try to relax your shoulders while working.



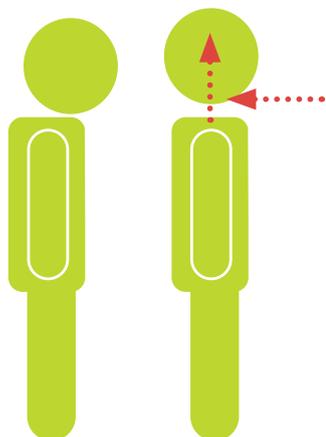
FOOT ROTATION

Hold onto the chair with hands either side. Straighten leg and lift foot a few centimetres off floor. Circle foot in one direction several times. Repeat in the opposite direction.

Repeat for the other foot.

Check LEG AND FOOT comfort

- If the seat of your chair is digging into the backs of your thighs, adjust the seat pan angle so that it angles slightly forwards.
- If the seat is too high lower the chair (and desk if necessary) or use a footrest to support your feet.
- Make sure there are no objects under or next to your desk that obstruct your movement.



CHIN TUCKS

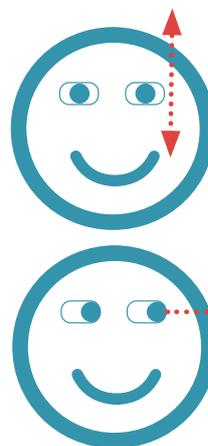
Raise your head to straighten your neck. Keep your head straight and pull your chin in creating a double chin. Hold for 10 seconds.

Repeat several times.

Check NECK posture

- Position the top of your screen at eye level. You may need a monitor raiser (or, as a temporary solution, a phone book) to achieve the desired height.

- If you need to refer to documents whilst typing, use a document holder directly beside or below the screen – it saves you looking down.
- When reading lengthy documents lower your chair and try using a document holder.



EYE EXERCISE

Sit up straight, face forward. Look up and down, then look left and right. Hold for 5 seconds each time. Repeat this sequence several times without moving your head.

Repeat every hour.

Check EYE comfort

- Is there enough light falling on your documents?
- Do windows or light fittings cause glare or reflection on the screen? If so, try turning the screen or blocking the path of the light. Otherwise, try using a glare guard on your screen.
- Use a screen with a light background when working with text. Software with a light background for text is more comfortable for the eyes.
- Do you experience regular headaches at work? This can sometimes be caused by too much light, incorrect workstation set-up, or as a result of visual problems. If you experience headaches, try the following:
 - If there is too much light, try reducing it – the can be done by removing globes from lights.
 - Ensure that your workstation is adjusted to suit you.
 - Consider having your eyes checked in order to rule out or treat any possible problems. ●