

Exercises to reduce neck stiffness

Arthritis in the neck can lead to stiffness, and this can make daily activities such as looking over your shoulder to reverse a car very difficult. If this sounds familiar, you may find the below exercises help to improve the mobility of your neck.

You should always build up new activities slowly. You may experience mild discomfort whilst performing these exercises. If this persists, or if you feel nauseous or dizzy whilst doing these exercises, stop immediately and consult your doctor. Don't force through the pain.

These exercises are intended to be gentle. However, if you have any concerns about whether they are suitable for you, please consult a healthcare professional before taking part.

For more information, visit: www.arthritisaction.org.uk

Neck stretch



- Sit up straight on a chair. Keep your back straight
- Put one hand on the side of your head and let the weight of gravity drop the head forwards and a little to the opposite side
- Bring the opposite shoulder down
- Hold the stretch for 30 seconds
- Repeat 3 times
- Repeat on the other side

Assisted neck rotation



Sometimes it is not the whole neck that is stiff, just certain joints. The purpose of this exercises is to encourage movement at a specific spinal level:

- Hold back on the lowest bone at the base of the neck
- Turn the head to the opposite side within the pain free range and hold for 30 seconds
- Repeat, this time holding back on the joint above
- Repeat at each level of the neck



Neck retractions

Neck retractions can help to open the back of the spine and can help to reduce tension in the muscles and stiffness in the joints:

- Sit with your back straight
- Bring your chin in straightening the neck (this should not make the front of the throat uncomfortable) and hold for 30 seconds
- Repeat 5 times