Stretching Exercises for the Workplace

THESE EXERCISES

This programme has suggestions of stretches that can be done in your workplace/at your desk. The focus is to lengthen shortened tight muscles. Often sitting in one position for prolonged periods of time results in your muscles becoming tired and tight, or 'stuck' in poor postures which can lead to muscle spasm and pain. Moving your body and changing your posture regularly through the day can help prevent this. It is important to ensure the stretches are performed with good technique and control. Make sure to repeat the same number of exercises on both sides of the body. Remember everyone is different so a physical therapist may give guidance that is more specific to you if you are looking for a bespoke plan.

WARM UP AND COOL DOWN

If it's practical, it's good to warm up a bit before the exercises, to get the circulation flowing to your muscles. This could be a quick walk around the office or up and down a flight of stairs.

Hamstring and Calf Stretch



Standing up, place your foot on a chair or Swiss ball. Keep your leg straight. Pull your toes and ankle towards you. You should feel a stretch behind your knee and your calf muscle and into the back of your thigh. To make the stretch stronger, push your leg downwards into the ball/chair, or rest your foot on something higher.

Repeat 2 times | Hold for 20 seconds
Perform both sides

Hip Flexor and Quad Stretch



Stand up with good posture, and bend your knee so your foot goes towards your butt. Extend your hip behind you, to create a stretch to the front and top of your thigh. You may need to hold on to a table for support. This exercise will help to stretch your hip flexor (psoas and rectus femoris muscles), and quadricep muscle group.

Repeat 2 times | Hold for 20 seconds
Perform both sides

Neck Semi-Circles



Circle your neck to one side, and then the other side. Move your neck in a semi-circle direction. Don't worry if you get some crunching or scrunching in the neck, this is normal. You can use this exercise to increase the mobility of your neck.

Repeat 10 times times
Perform both sides

Video:
http://youtu.be/8QCjZMdclpc

Neck Side Flexion



Ensuring your nose is pointing forwards, bend your neck as if you were taking your left ear towards your left shoulder. To increase the stretch, drop your right shoulder and gently pull your right arm downwards with the opposite hand. You should feel a stretch to the side of your neck, on the side you are pulling your arm. Repeat to the right. This exercise will help improve mobility to your neck.

Repeat 2 times | Hold for 20 seconds | Perform both sides sides

Video:
http://youtu.be/LWGVZV7ybQI

Neck Retraction



Pull your head back as far as comfortable and down slightly (make a double chin). You will feel some gentle tension at the front and back of your neck. This exercise will help your neck and upper back posture.

Repeat 5 times | Hold for 10 seconds

Video:
http://youtu.be/VYcifC6BFgc

Shoulder Elevations



Raise both arms above your head. Hold on to one wrist as you stretch and pull upwards gently. Keep your neck straight, avoid tilting your head downwards.

Repeat 2 times
Hold for 20 seconds
Perform both sides

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