

# Jaw and Neck Exercises



Always follow the instructions from your healthcare provider. This does not replace professional medical advice. Stop with any increase in pain or dizziness.

## Exercises for your jaw

Normally you should be able to put 3 fingers sideways in your mouth. If you cannot do this, you may have jaw stiffness. You need to be able to open your mouth for eating, speaking, and dental care. The exercises below will help you prevent and improve jaw stiffness.

For each of the exercises, do the following **without causing pain**:

- **Hold for 5 seconds** before slowly returning to your normal position.
- Do these exercise 5 times each, 3 different times of the day.

Doing these exercises in front of a mirror can help.

<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Jaw Stretches Side to Side</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Keep your teeth slightly apart.</li><li>• Slide your bottom teeth sideways to the right.</li><li>• Slide your bottom teeth sideways to the left.</li></ul>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Jaw Opening</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lower your jaw as far as possible.</li></ul>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Jaw Protrusion (move forward)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Keep your teeth slightly apart.</li><li>• Slide your teeth forward until your bottom teeth overlap in front of your top teeth.</li></ul>	

## Exercises for your neck

Neck tightness is common after surgery or radiation treatment. You may notice that it is more difficult to turn or tip your head, or look up at the ceiling. If you are receiving radiation treatment, we recommend that you practice these exercises everyday, for 6 months to 1 year after treatment finishes. Sometimes tightness is a late side effect and does not happen for several months.

### For Good Posture:

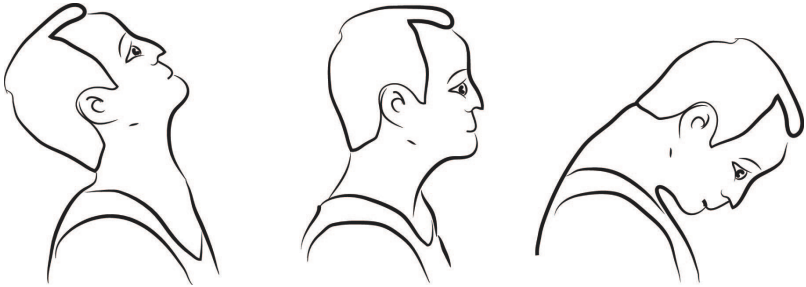
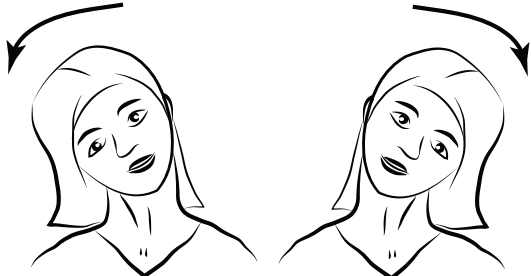
**Tip!**

- Try to keep your head in line with your neck and shoulders. Good posture will help prevent your chest (front) muscles from overpowering the weaker muscles at the back of your neck.
- Keep your shoulders back and relaxed, and your chin slightly tucked in. You should feel as if your neck is straight and long and that the top of your head is reaching towards the ceiling.

The exercises below will help you to keep your neck from getting stiff. A rehab therapist can show you how to do them properly. Always practice **good posture**. Doing these exercises in front of a mirror can help.

For each of the exercises, do the following **without causing pain**:

- **Hold for 5 seconds** before slowly returning to your normal position.
- Do these exercise 5 times each, 3 different times of the day.

<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Tipping Your Head Back and Forth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bend your head forward until you feel a stretch behind your neck.</li> <li>• Tip your head back to look up to the ceiling—support your neck with one or both hands, if needed.</li> <li>• Stop if you feel dizzy or nauseous.</li> </ul>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Tilting Your Head to the Side</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tip your ear towards your shoulder until you feel a stretch at the side of your neck without pain.</li> <li>• Tip your ear to the other side.</li> </ul>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Head Turn</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turn your head to one side until you feel a stretch.</li> <li>• You should be able to see behind you.</li> </ul>	