

*Normalization of Muscle Function*  
**Chapter 7 - Cervical Rotatores & Multifidi Muscles**

**Do's & Don't's**

- The following instructions will help to reduce stress and strain on you neck muscles:
- Use a reading stand or music stand that functions to raise reading and work materials closer to eye level...thereby avoiding prolonged neck flexion.
- Elevate your computer monitor to eye level with a monitor stand...again, avoiding prolonged neck flexion.
- Have your eyeglass prescription checked and make sure that the focal length is appropriate for card playing, using a computer or your work.
- Use bifocal insets that are large and fully half the height of the entire lens!
- Make sure that your eyeglass frames do not occlude the lower portion of your line of site on looking down.
- Avoid exercising on a stationary bike with low handlebars that have no purpose except to cause you to hunch your back and extend your neck!
- Use a lumbar support or place a cloth roll or small pillow at the small of your back to support good sitting posture.
- Practice good posture exercises.
- Yoga may be a good choice, but talk with the instructor about your neck pain prior to taking a class. However, if your pain increases, then it may be that this is still not the right thing for you.

**Accupressure**

Sometimes you may feel tender points in the back of your neck. Many people have found that by applying a deep and steady pressure to the point and it eventually disappears. You don't have to massage yourself to be successful just press on the point to illicit the feathers edge of pain and follow that edge with increasing pressure until it disappears.



Stretching these muscles in the shower is a great way to feel better. Touch your chin to your shoulder, looking down toward your armpit with your hand on your head as in Figure A. Reach down toward the floor with your free hand to accentuate the stretch. Hold this position for 3 deep inhalations and exhalations. See if your head can flex further on the exhalations and then do the other side.

Next look up and to the right/left in a direction toward the ceiling. Again, place your hand on your head as show in Figure B and apply a light traction. Hold this position for 3 deep inhalations and exhalations. See if your head can sidebend further on the exhalations and then do the other side.

Last, look straight down and try to touch your chin to your chest. Place your hands as show and apply a light traction again as in Figure C. Hold this position for 3 deep inhalations and exhalations. See if your head can bend forward further on the exhalations.

**Stretching for Muscle Relaxation**



**Ideally, do all of the following barefoot.** Practice makes perfect and many can go from the first part all the way to mastering the last in just 3 weeks.

**Strengthening your foot**

It's a combination of strengthening your foot and increasing your connection to the ground. Start with your foot in a relaxed position, as pictured in "A".

The next step is to try to "palm" the ground with your foot, as pictured in "B". That means you try to squeeze the ground while keeping your toes as straight as possible, as pictured beside. Hold both feet in this floor squeezing position for 15-30 seconds and then relax. Repeat this exercise 2-3 times at a sitting and do it 2-3 times a day.



**Balance with your eyes & arms open**

Stand on one leg with your eyes and arms open as pictured in "C". Your foot should be gripping the ground as described above. Your goal is to hold this position for 15-30 seconds without any sway in your body. As soon as you fall off then switch to the other foot. Repeat this for each side 2-3 times. This needs to be performed 2-3 times a day. It is hard to do exercises under perfect conditions and with this in mind you can do it in line at the grocery store or on an elevator...where ever you need to be...**JUST DO IT!**

You cannot progress to the next step until you've mastered this first part of this step. It is amazing how many people cannot balance on one foot without sway. Try it among your friends and you will find a new topic of conversation!



**Balance with your eyes & arms folded**

This is just like the other exercise but you are supposed to fold your arms this time as pictured in "D". Your goal is to hold this position for 15-30 seconds without any sway in your body. As soon as you fall off then switch to the other foot. Repeat this for each side 2-3 times. This needs to be performed 2-3 times a day. Once you've mastered it you are ready for the next part.

**Balance with your eyes open & arms open**

Again, repeat the same exercise you've previously mastered but this time with your eyes closed, as pictured in "E". Once mastered this you can move on.

**Balance with your eyes closed & arms folded**

This is not so easy, as our model is gracefully demonstrating in "F".

