

Chapter 57 - Suboccipital Muscles: Rectus Capitis Posteriors & Obliquus Capiti Muscles

Do's & Dont's

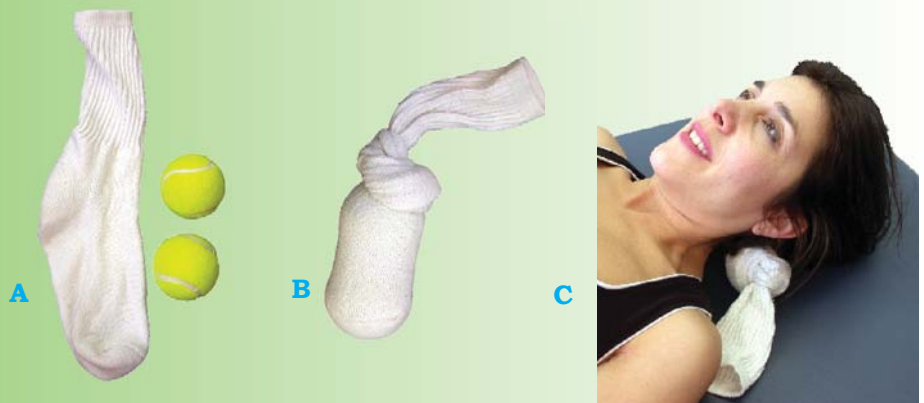
The following instructions will help to reduce stress and strain on you neck muscles:

- Do not allow your neck to become chilled. Wear turtlenecks, mock-turtlenecks and scarves. For sleep avoid drafts and have your neck covered.
- 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.

Acupressure

Take an old pair of tube socks and place a couple of tennis balls in them (figure A). Slide the balls all the way to the toe end. Tie a knot in the tube socks as close to balls as possible so that the balls are held as close together as possible (figure B). Lie with the balls at the base of your skull for 15 minutes 1-2 times a day until the sensation of local tenderness disappears (figure C).



Self-Stretch

You can do this exercise in the seated in a high back chair or standing position. Flex your head upon your neck with a good nod.

Take your hands and place them upon your head at the base of your skull applying a light pressure in the direction of flexion.

Look up with your eyes and take a deep breath (Figure A). Then look down and exhale (Figure B). As you look down your head should flex more. Repeat this self-stretch 3-5 times. This stretch should be done 2-4 times a day until the pain and tightness are gone. Then it should be done at least once a week.

