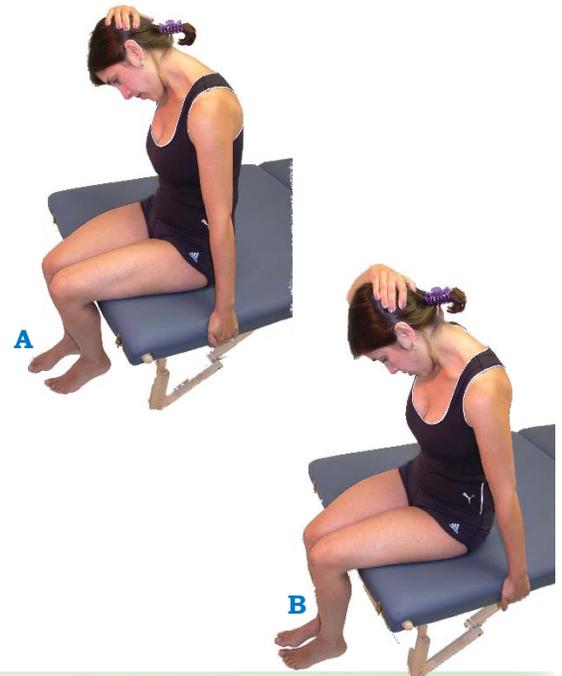


The upper trapezius is often involved in neck and head pain and has a large role in neck and head movement. To stretch the upper trapezius sit on a chair and grasp the seat at your side near the seatback, then lean and bend toward your opposite knee (figure A). For many people that is all they need to start a good upper trapezius stretch, but you can enhance the stretching experience by taking your other hand and placing it on the opposite side of the back of your head, as shown.

Hold this stretch for 20-30 seconds and repeat 2-3 times. There are a few modifications that may also augment the stretching experience and benefit you more. First, a chin tuck will increase the stretch on the skin. Second, moving your hand to different positions along the seat of the chair from the back position to the middle of it will also change your experience, as well as the muscle fibers that are stretched. As you move your hand more toward the middle of the seat change your leaning direction more toward the side (figure B).



### Middle Trapezius Stretch

In the seated position, reach across your chest with your affected arm. Grasp the elbow of your affected arm with your other hand and continue to pull across your chest (figure C). Take a deep breath and feel the stretch in the area of your shoulder. Keep the tension on to the feather's edge of discomfort until the discomfort disappears. Do both sides 3-5 times or until they stretch equally. This stretch should be performed 2-3 times a day, unless otherwise instructed by your physician.

### Lower Trapezius Stretch

Lay on your back with your arms over your head. Take deep full breaths as discomfort dissipates (figure D).



- A rolling backpack or waist-purse to decrease shoulder abuse
- Chairs that offer elbow support (not just hand support) should be sought for short upper arms
- Stand or walk with the hands in your pockets
- Swimming and jumping rope while moving forwards are good exercises that should help
- Jogging tends to aggravate the trigger points
- Turn the whole body to fully face a person when talking to them

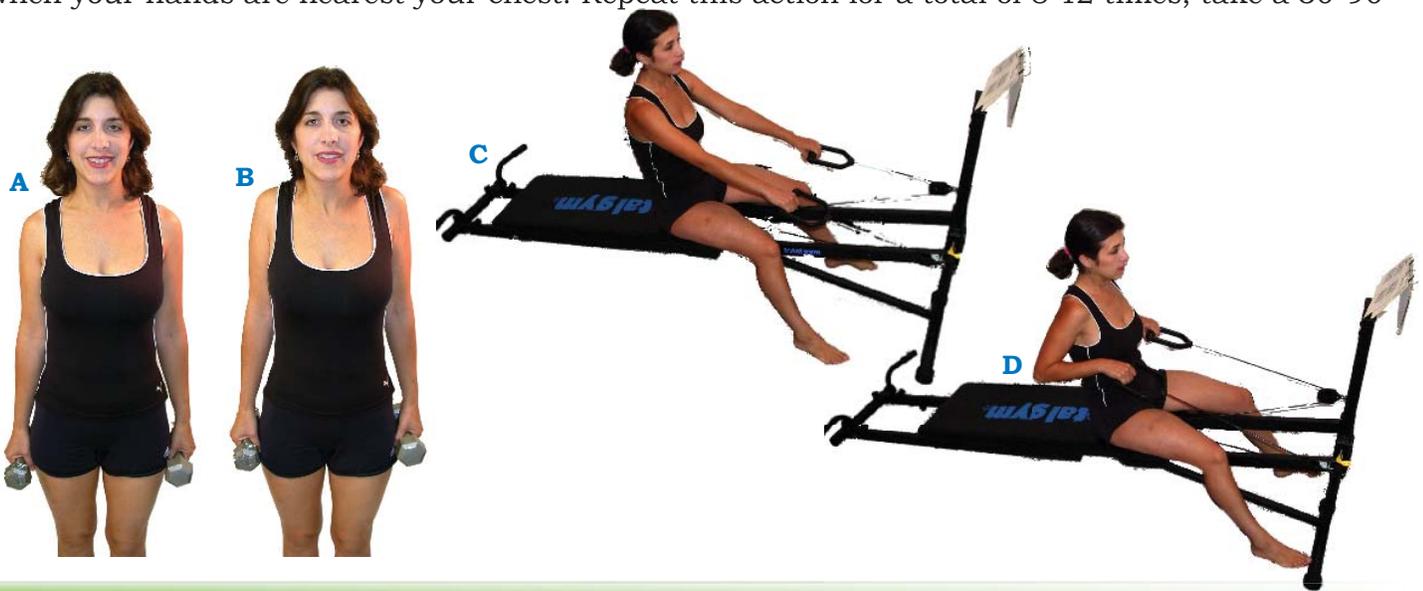
### Upper Trapezius Strengthening

Shoulder shrugs with light weights are a great exercise to strengthen and stretch the upper trapezius muscles. Starting in either the standing position with not more than 5 lb weights in your hands and with your arms at your sides (figure A) bring your shoulders straight up into the shrug position (figure B) while completely inhaling. Then slowly lower your shoulders as you exhale completely. Repeat this action for a total of 8-12 times, take a 30-90 second break and repeat as directed by your physician for a total of 3 sets.

### Whole Trapezius Strengthening

Seated rowing exercises will strengthen the entire trapezius, particularly the middle and upper portions. Starting with your arms straight in front of you pull the hand grips back and allow your hands to separate (figures C & D, respectively). Note how your shoulder blades come together when your hands are nearest your chest. Repeat this action for a total of 8-12 times, take a 30-90

Strengthening



### Middle and Lower Trapezius Re-training

The middle and lower trapezius has a lot to do with controlling the shoulder blade. Start lying on your back with your arms palm up at your side (figure E). Bend your arms and bring them together like your praying (figure F). From this position and trying to keep you forearms together reach above your head (figure G) until your arms are straight up and separate naturally (figure H). Then slide them like your going to make a snow angel downwards (figure I) & into the start position (figure E).

Alternate Self-Stretch

