

Stretching with Deep Breaths

- Sit on chair, bottom well back
- Cross your arms and try to reach your fingers to the floor
- Bend head forward and breathe out for as long as possible
- Lift head, straighten up
- Lift arms into a “V” overhead as you lean backwards over the chair
- Lift ribs and push breastbone forward
- Take a big breath in during this movement
- Hold the stretch
- Return to reaching for the floor as you breathe out
- Repeat 3 times more



ANKYLOSING SPONDYLITIS A Home Exercise Programme

Physiotherapy Department

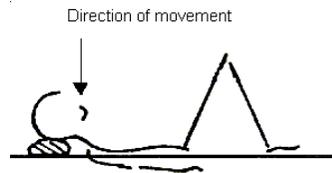
All the exercises should be performed at a slow to medium pace, avoiding quick and jerky movements. Always aim to reach your full range of movement. Always come out of a stretch SLOWLY.

Exercise 1- POSTURE- POSTURE-POSTURE

- Frequently through the day think POSTURE - WALK TALL. Lift your chest, gently draw your shoulders back, lift your pelvic floor and tighten your lower abdomen muscles

Exercise 2

- Lie comfortably with arms relaxed at your sides. Knees may be bent or straight use a folded towel to achieve a neutral position for your head and neck.
- Tuck your chin in flattening your neck into the floor. Hold for 3-5 seconds
- You should be lengthening the neck muscles between base of the skull and shoulders



Exercise 3

- In the same starting position as in Exercise 2
- Keep shoulders relaxed
- Slowly rotate head from side to side reaching end of range, don't let the opposite shoulder lift up

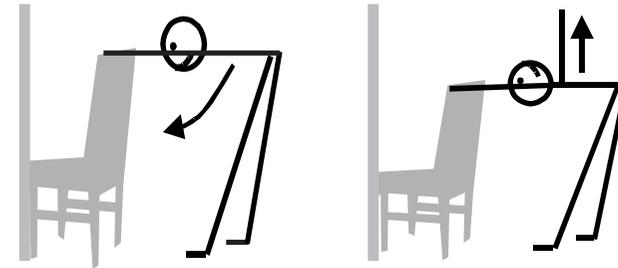
Exercise 4

- In the same starting position as in Exercise 2, bend and hold your elbow stretch your arms () 5-10 seconds



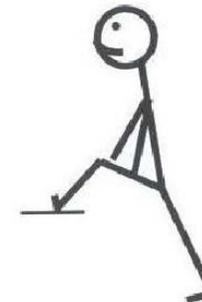
Arms Swing with a Twist

- Return to the hips-back position
- Swing right arm under chest as you twist to the left
- Then swing out to the right and up straight overhead
- Look at your hand as it moves
- Keep that 90° at hips!
- First one way, and then the other



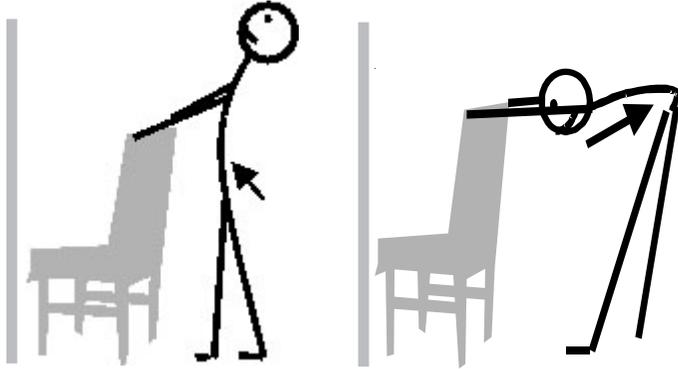
Foot to Top of Chair

- Hands rest lightly on top of chair back
- Lift each foot up in turn
- Aim to get foot to the top of the chair before you have done 8 lifts



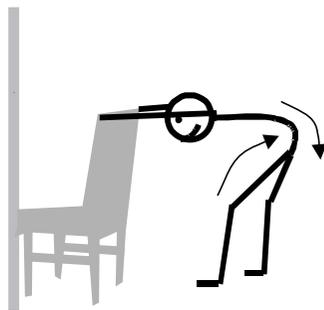
Hips Forward and Backwards

- Push hips forward towards chair, then backwards
- Keep knees straight
- Look up as hips go forward and tuck head in as hips go back



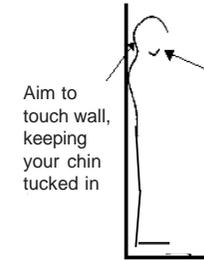
Hips Circle

- After the 8th push backwards, hold that position
- Let elbows bend a little
- Circle hips four times to the right and then four times to the left



Exercise 5

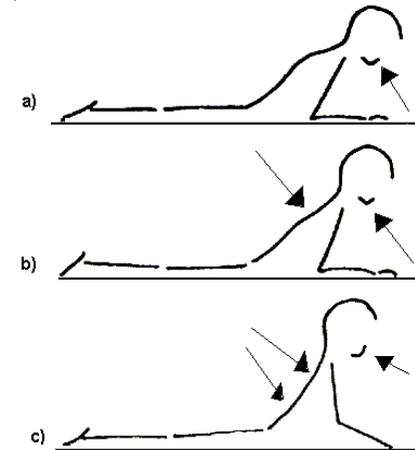
- Use this position **several times a day** to stretch out
- Flatten yourself against a wall, gently tucking your chin in
- In this position, turn your head as far as possible one way, then the other



Exercise 6

Lie on your front, resting comfortably on your forearms

- a) Tuck in chin
- b) Flatten back between shoulder blades
- c) Holding positions a) and b), slowly straighten elbows to arch lower back. Hold for 8-10 seconds



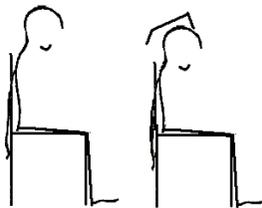
IN SITTING

Exercise 7

- Keeping your shoulders and body still, turn to look over your shoulder as far as you can go holding for 3-5 seconds each time
- Repeat 3 times each way holding for 3-5 seconds each time
- Then add gentle, sustained pressure to increase the movement

Exercise 8

- Sit on an armless kitchen chair
- Reach one hand down the back leg of the chair to stretch sideways make sure you keep your bottom firmly on the door
- Feel the rib cage open up
- Repeat bringing the opposite arm up over your head to stretch further
- Then add a deep breath



GENERAL ADVICE

1. Try to allow time to lie flat on your front or back for 20 minutes daily
2. Remember to tuck in your chin, and lead from your chest when walking
3. Try to make yourself a little routine to do several times throughout the day to counteract the effects of gravity and avoid prolonged positions

EXERCISE FOR THE EARLY HOURS (OR ANYTIME)

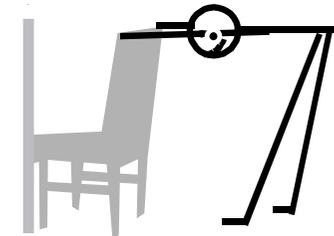


Pain stopping you sleeping?

- Get out of bed
- Put on something warm and loose
- Get the kettle going
- Find a chair (in a room where you won't disturb anyone) and do each of these exercises several times, gradually increasing the speed (or other exercises you find especially helpful)
- Have a drink
- Return to bed loosened up and you will get back to sleep

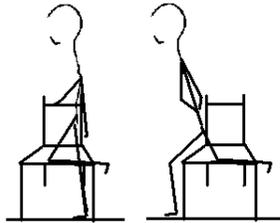
THE EXERCISES

- Wedge a chair facing forwards onto the wall
- Face the back of the chair
- Hold the top of the back, hands shoulder width apart
- Place feet apart, far enough back to bend hips to 90°
- Feel the stretch in the backs of your thighs



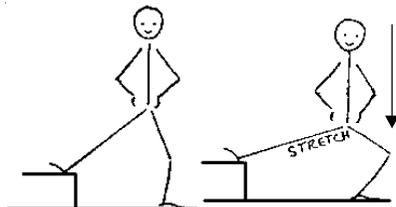
Exercise 15

- Face the side of a chair, holding the back with your right hand
- Bend your right knee and place your right shin on the seat
- Move your left foot forward as far as possible
- Place both hands behind your back
- Bend your left knee as far as possible, keeping your head up and your back straight
- Repeat on the other side



Exercise 16

- Raise one leg sideways onto a low stool (12-15" high), keeping the knee straight
- Balance carefully on the opposite leg
- Keep your body vertical and place your hands on your hips
- Slowly bend the supporting knee while applying a stretch to the inner side of the raised leg
- Hold for 8-10 seconds
- Relax
- Progress the stretch by bending the supporting knee further
- Repeat with the opposite leg



Exercise 9

- Still sitting, raise elbows to shoulder level and tuck in chin
- Slowly twist, turning to look over shoulder



Exercise 10

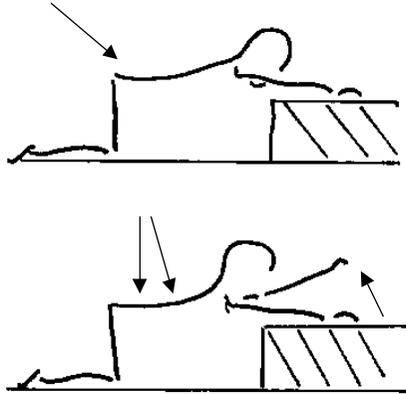
Breathing Exercise

- To encourage EXPANSION of the rib cage, sit comfortably, with head and shoulders supported
- Keep shoulders and upper chest relaxed and still throughout your deep breaths
- Take a deep breath using the bottom of your lungs
- Hold for 2 seconds, then 'sniff' in a bit more if you can
- This can also be done with a towel grasped around your lower ribs using the towel to give a little resistance as you breathe in

Only do 3 or 4 deep breaths at a time, or you may feel a little light-headed

Exercise 11

- Kneel on the floor with your arms stretched forwards on a low chair/bed
- Try to drop through your arms
- In this position try to lift first one arm, then the other

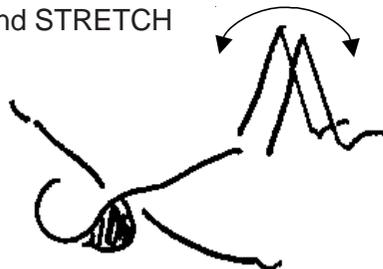


An alternative position for this exercise is to sit back on your heels and stretch your hands forwards as far as you can.



Exercise 12

- Lie with your head supported in a neutral position
- Bend knees with feet on the floor
- Stretch out arms at shoulder level
- Keeping arms outstretched, SLOWLY roll knees from side to side. Aim to touch the floor
- Feel your spine TWIST and STRETCH



Exercise 13

- Stand with your feet shoulder width apart, toes pointing straight ahead.
- Keep your knees relaxed.
- Place your hand on your hip for support.
- Stretch the opposite arm above your head.
- Slowly bend sideways towards the hand on your hip.
- Feel the side of your trunk stretch.
- Hold for 8-10 seconds.
- Relax and then stretch further into the movement.
- Repeat to the opposite side.



Exercise 14

- Lie on your back with both legs stretched out straight.
- Pull one knee towards your chest, keeping the opposite leg flat on the floor.
- Feel the STRETCH at the front of the straightened hip.
- Hold for 5-10 seconds.
- Repeat with the opposite leg.

