Fitness Forum: To stretch a rule

by Copley News Service

Performing a sitting spine rotation can put you back in circulation.

QUITE A STRETCH - Firefighter Jill Murray stretches her lower and mid back in a seated rotation movement. Maintaining erect posture, she rotates her chest with the help of her arms as she exhales. CNS Photo by Howard Lipin.

THE MOVE: Sitting spine rotation

WORKS ON: Stretches the lower and middle back and shoulders, and opens the chest. Improves blood flow to muscles that have been static.

SET UP: Sit sideways on a chair with your knees a hip-width apart. Turn your chest toward the backrest. Place the hand nearest to the chair on the backrest as far behind you as possible. Bring the other hand across your chest and hold on to the other end of the backrest.

THE STRETCH: Sit up straight and lift your chest. The chin stays aligned with the chest and level with the floor. Maintain the position of your knees so they are even with each other. Take a deep breath and, when you exhale, push with the hand and arm closest to the chair and pull with the opposite arm to rotate your chest toward the backrest. Hold for three breaths.

REPETITIONS: Perform one repetition per side, each hour.

PRECAUTIONS: Do this on a chair that is high enough to allow your knees to be at or below hip height. Keep your chin aligned with your chest. Sit up straight, do not allow your lower back to slump.

OPTIONS: You may vary the hand or arm position if unable to place them accordingly.

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