

Fitness Forum: Relax neck tightness

by CNS

Stretching your neck muscles shouldn't be a pain.

NECK STRETCH - Holding his wrist behind his back to keep his shoulder down, firefighter Joe Penolio stretches tight neck muscles by tilting his head to the opposite side of the lowered shoulder and holding the position. CNS Photo by Nadia Borowski Scott.

THE MOVE: Neck stretching.

WORKS ON: Relaxes the lateral (side) neck muscles.

SET UP: Standing or sitting with good upright posture.

STEP 1: Hold your left wrist with your right hand behind your back. This helps to keep your left shoulder blade down.

STEP 2: Slowly tilt your head to your right by bringing your right ear closer to the right shoulder until gentle stretching on the left side of your neck is felt. Hold the position for 30 seconds while maintaining normal breathing. Keep looking forward (you are neither looking up nor down).

REPETITIONS: Repeat on the other side (you hold the right wrist with your left hand and tilt your head to left). Repeat two to three times.

SAFETY TIP: Do not overstretch. Stretching should not be painful. You should feel gentle tension on your muscle, not pain. When stretching is done correctly, it should feel good.

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