

NECK EXERCISES FOR CYCLING

Neck pain from cycling stems from poor posture and weak muscles. Pain caused by neck hyperextension is exacerbated by positional issues on the bike, combined with lack of flexibility. Just as you have core stabilisers around your lower back, you have stabiliser muscles called deep neck flexors around your neck to hold your head up. Restore balance by keeping the neck muscles loose and relaxed through a routine of strengthening and stretching exercises.

YOUR STRETCHING PROGRAMME

This exercise programme has specific stretches to target key muscles. It is important to ensure the stretches are performed with good technique. Poor practice may place potential strain on your body.

GUIDANCE FOR STRETCHING EXERCISES

Hold all the stretches for 20 seconds each and repeat them five times. It is important to stretch both sides where applicable to reach a similar point of flexibility.

NECK FLEXION OVERSTRETCH

Bend your neck forwards, and place a hand on your back of your head and gently pull your neck so that your chin tucks downwards. This will stretch your neck muscles. Hold the stretch for the required time, and relax.

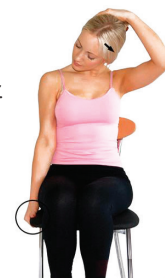


SETS REPS

 **Video:**
<http://youtu.be/VwSRo8kdjeg>

LEVATOR SCAPULAE STRETCH

Bend your neck forwards, and then side-bend your neck by taking your left ear towards your left shoulder. Hold on to a chair to make the stretch stronger. This will allow you to feel a stretch at the back and side of your neck. You can make the stretch stronger by assisting with your hand.



SETS REPS

 **Video:**
<http://youtu.be/imLiENOKf14>

POSTERIOR SCALENE STRETCH

Place your fingers in the webbing of your neck (just above the collar bone), and rotate your neck to the opposite side, and tuck your chin down. You will feel the stretch under your fingers at the side of the neck. Hold the stretch, and relax. You can make the stretch stronger by using the hand on the side you are looking down at to gently pull your head further - essentially 'smelling your armpit'.



SETS REPS

 **Video:**
<http://youtu.be/EdKGB0v4Mng>

WALL LEAN NECK STRENGTHENING

Stand approximately 1 foot from a wall, place a towel behind your head, and lean against the towel. Make sure your body has good straight alignment, and keep your chin up. If you find this easy, stand a little further from the wall. You should feel a gentle muscle contraction at the back of your neck (you may not feel it at first, but after 20-30 seconds you will feel the muscle contraction).



SETS REPS

 **Video:**
<http://youtu.be/TGfE3uvigIQ>

NECK FLEXOR STRENGTHENING 2

Lie on your back, with your head resting off the back of a pillow (so the neck is tilted backwards into extension slightly). Lift your head off the floor/bed while tucking your chin in slightly. You should feel the muscles at the front and side of your neck contracting.



SETS REPS

 **Video:**
<http://youtu.be/ISfbvzoBnGc>

NECK FLEXION GOOF BALL

Bend your neck forwards, pushing against a goofball resting against the wall. Hold the pressure, and relax. This is a strengthening exercise for your neck.



SETS REPS

 **Video:**
<http://youtu.be/R6pJtqkC4go>

The information contained in this article is intended as general guidance and information only and should not be relied upon as a basis for planning individual medical care or as a substitute for specialist medical advice in each individual case. ©Co-Kinetic 2017