

OFFICE TENSIONS AND STIFF MUSCLES

For people who spend their working day sitting at a desk, whether at home or in an office, it is very easy to get stiff and aching muscles. As we get tired, so our posture suffers and we can find ourselves becoming round-shouldered. Many office chairs are not good for the posture, and long hours spent staring at a computer screen can give our neck, upper and lumbar back muscles a very hard time. Regular breaks help: get up and walk around every now and then, and also try to loosen your body using some of these simple stretches while sitting at your desk.

ARM AND BACK STRETCH



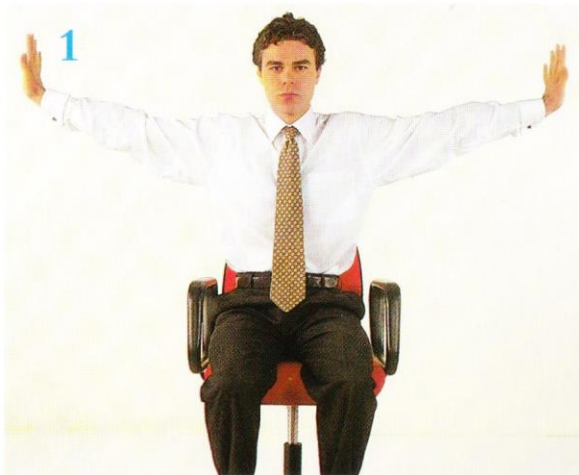
▲ Link your hands together, palms away from your body, and push your arms straight out in front of you. Hold for a couple of moments, relax and repeat.

ARM AND CHEST STRETCH



▲ Link your hands together behind your back, over the top of the chair, and lift your arms slightly. Push away from your body, hold, then repeat.

FOREARM STRETCH



▲ Take your arms straight out to the sides and stretch them out.



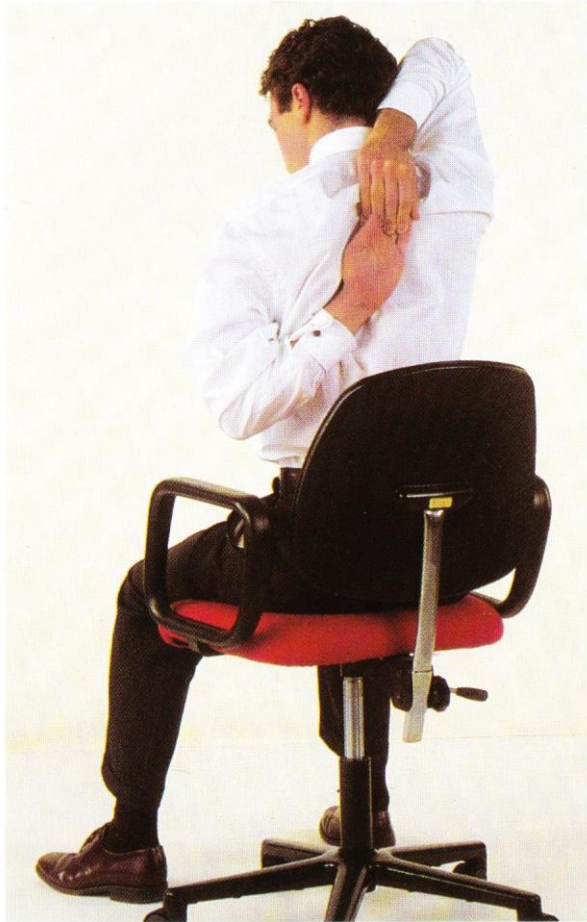
▲ Alternately flex and extend your hands. Feel the pull on the upper and lower sides of your forearms as you do so.

BACK AND SHOULDER STRETCH



▲ Stretch your arms up in the air over your head. As you take a breath, arch your back slightly. Relax with the exhalation and repeat a couple of times.

POSTURE CLASP



▲ Take one arm behind your back and bend it upwards, with the hand reaching towards the opposite shoulder. With your other arm raised and bent downwards over your shoulder, try to clasp your fingers, or even your hands, together. Hold for a short time, then repeat with your hands in the opposite positions.

SEATED CAT STRETCH



▲ Pull the chair back from the desk slightly to give yourself more room, then bend forward and clasp your ankles.

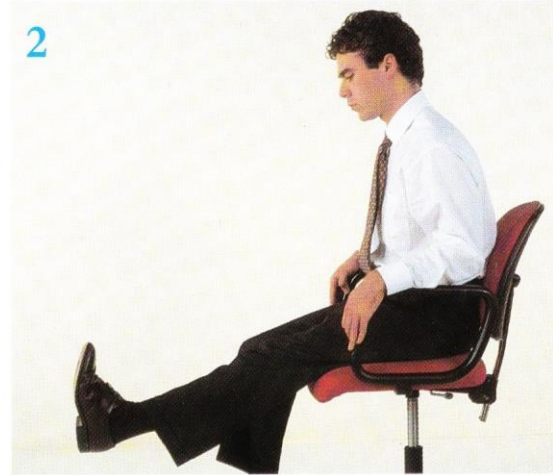


▲ Arch your back to stretch, relax and repeat.

CALF STRETCH

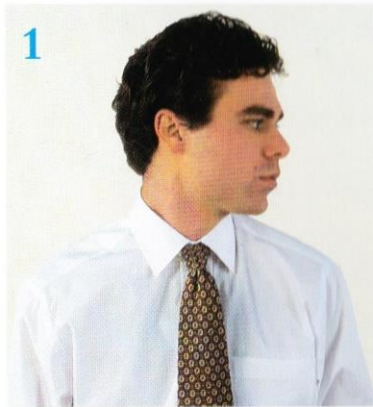


▲ Sit fairly upright, then lift and straighten each leg alternately.



▲ Flex the foot to stretch the calf muscle. Repeat a few times.

NECK TWISTS

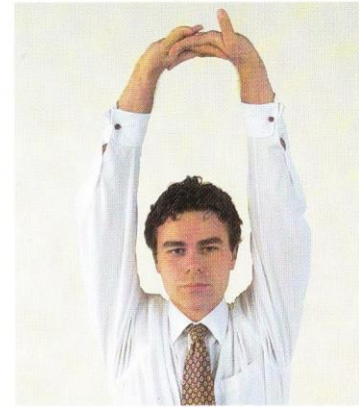


▲ Slowly turn your head to one side, feeling the extension in the neck muscles.



▲ Repeat, turning the head from side to side.

SHOULDER RELEASE



▲ Finally, link your fingers together and stretch your arms high above your head.