



Session 2: Stretch Summary

Reminders:

- Stretch gently and without pain
- Breathe deeply
- Begin each position standing relaxed and natural, with feet about hip distance apart and arms at sides.
- When moving side to side, the range of motion from one side of the body to the other will not necessarily be the same. (*i.e., You may turn or stretch further on one side than the other.*)

STRETCHES FOR THE NECK, SHOULDERS, ARMS AND SPINE

Let's Practice

Note: "Neutral" is the head in normal anatomical position, facing forward, not tipped up or down

NECK: **Begin in Neutral**

- Inhale with head in neutral, exhale, tip the head to the right, taking the right ear towards the right shoulder. Remain here, inhaling and exhaling one time. Stretch should be felt in the left side of the neck, top of the left shoulder. Inhale up to neutral, exhale, tip the head to the left, taking the left ear towards the left shoulder. Remain here, inhaling and exhaling one time. Stretch should be felt in the right side of the neck, top of the right shoulder. Inhale up to neutral. **Repeat 3 times.**

SHOULDERS: **Begin in Neutral**

- **Shoulder Rolls:** Inhaling, draw the shoulders forward and then up towards the ears, exhaling, draw the shoulders back (squeezing shoulder blades) and down. Repeat 6 times. At the bottom of the last rotation/exhale, reverse the direction of the movement. Inhale, draw the shoulders back and up, exhale draw them forward and down. Repeat 6 times. Make the movements as large or small as you want, varying them and you move; let the arms follow so that the movement involves the entire extremity.
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SESSION 1: STRETCH SUMMARY

ARMS AND HANDS:

- Take arms out in front at shoulder height. Circle the hands/wrists towards each other **3 times**, reverse and circle the hands/wrists away from each other **3 times**. Circle both to the right **3 times**, switch and circle both to the left **3 times**.
- Bring the arms in, elbows at sides, hands out in front at about shoulder height or whatever is comfortable. Palms face each other. Bring pinky finger to thumb on each hand, release; bring ring finger to thumb on each hand, release; Repeat with all finger/thumb combinations, then reverse, doing forefinger and thumbs, middle fingers and thumbs, etc. **Repeat 3 times**. Limber up those fingers and practice fine motor skills.
- From same position, with palms facing each other, point fingers toward sky. Curl fingers into loose fists, extend fingers towards each other. Curl fingers into loose fists, extend fingers toward sky. **Repeat 6 times**.
- Drop the hands down and shake out the hands, arms and shoulders.

SPINE:

- **Side Stretch:** Standing naturally, inhale and lift the left arm straight up overhead. Exhale, leaning toward the right, left arm curving over the top of the head, opening the left side of the body and curving the right side into a "C". Press the left heel down into the floor. Right hand slides down the right side of the body. If this feels unstable, the right hand can rest against a table or chair back for support. Stretch should be felt in the left side of the body. Hold here; inhale and exhale for 2 breaths. With the next inhale, straighten the left arm and body, coming upright, exhale and float the left arm down along the body. **Repeat on the right side.**
- **Moving Spine Forward and Back (Cat/Cow).** Feet about hip distance apart for a solid base. Lean forward slightly, putting hands on thighs, table or chair back for support. Spine is straight, not curved. Inhale, filling the belly with breath, letting the stomach fill out and move forward as the back arches and the head and neck come up. (*Think: Opening the front of the body.*) Exhale, emptying the belly of air, pulling the navel in toward the spine. Round the back and tuck the hips under and drop the head/chin down toward the chest. Inhale, filling the belly, arching the spine, lifting the head and neck. (*Think "cow".*) Exhale, emptying the belly, rounding the spine, tucking hips and head. (*Think "cat".*) **Repeat 3 times.** Return to straight spine and stand up.

— Thank You for Choosing Health. See You Next Time!