



**Wrightington, Wigan and
Leigh Teaching Hospitals**
NHS Foundation Trust

Neck and Upper Back Exercises Level 2 v2

Version number: **2**

Last modified date: **13th June 2026**

Neck and Upper Back Exercises - Level 2

Patient Information

Musculoskeletal (MSK) Physiotherapy Services

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Disclaimer

Not all exercises are suitable for everyone and while every precaution was taken in selecting these exercises, they do not come without risks. If you have any concerns regarding injury, or whether or not you undertake any of the exercises, then you should consult your General Practitioner (GP) or Physiotherapist prior to commencing any exercises shown here.

It is quite normal to feel some discomfort following exercise, but it is important that this discomfort eases within 2 hours of finishing the exercise and doesn't have an overall negative effect on your symptoms.

The exercise plans shown here are designed to be used as a guide and a point of reference, they are not exhaustive and can be modified and progressed under the supervision of your physiotherapist.

Instructions

- Aim to do the exercise plan 3 to 4 times per week, with at least 1 day off in between to allow for recovery.
- Each exercise is repeated a number of times (for example, 5 or 10 times) to build up strength and flexibility. The repetitions make a 'set'.
- The number of repetitions is a guide and can be increased or decreased according to pain levels. If the exercise causes pain that lasts for more than 2 hours after finishing the exercise, then decrease the repetitions.
- Complete each exercise slowly and in a controlled manner, you should take your time and not rush. Take 30 seconds rest in between each set.

Contact the Physio department if you find the exercises are making your pain worse overall.

Contact Information

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Therapy Department- Wrightington Hospital

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Neck and Upper Back Level 2 – Exercises 1 to 12



1. Flexions

Stand or sit.

Clasp your hands behind your head. The stretch of your arms stretches the neck.

Hold stretching for approximately 30 seconds.

Repeat 5 times.

Sets 2.

Stop if the exercise makes you feel dizzy or uncomfortable.



1. Extensions

Sit with your hands be

Bend your head backw

Hold for approx. 5 sec

Repeat 5 times.

Sets 2.

Stop if the exercise ma



1. Side Flexion

Sit upright.

Tilt your head toward the opposite side. Using your hand to assist on the opposite side.

Hold for approx. 5 seconds.

Repeat 5 times each side.

Sets 2.

Stop if the exercise makes you feel dizzy or uncomfortable.



1. Rotations

Sit upright.

Turn your head to one side and gently push your head

Hold for approx. 5 seconds.

Repeat 5 times each side.

Sets 2.

Stop if the exercise makes you feel dizzy or uncomfortable.



1. Retractions

Sit straight-backed.

Pull your chin in. At the same time, pull your head backwards with your forehead.

Hold for 5 seconds and then relax.

Repeat 5 times.

Sets 2.

Stop if the exercise makes you feel dizzy or uncomfortable.



1. Cat & Camel

On your hands and knees
knees under your hips.

Hollow and then arch
forwards.

The movement can be
when hollowing your
shoulders when you arch

Hold each position for

Repeat 10 times in each

Sets 2.

Stop if the exercise ma

1. Thoracic Spine



On all fours, put your hands under your hips. Keep your spine

Reach one arm under the other and reach towards the ceiling

Note: Focus on the movement



Repeat 10 times to each side

Sets 2.

Stop if the exercise makes you



1. Resisted Ext

Sit upright.

Try to bend your head b
your hand(s).

Hold approx. 5 secs.

Repeat 5 times.

Sets 3..



1. Resisted Flex

Sit upright.

Try to bend your head f
hand(s).

Hold approx. 5 secs.

Repeat 5 times.

Sets 3.



1. Resisted Side

Sit upright.

Try to turn your head to
your hand.

Hold approx. 5 secs. Re

Repeat 5 times each sid

Sets 3.



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