

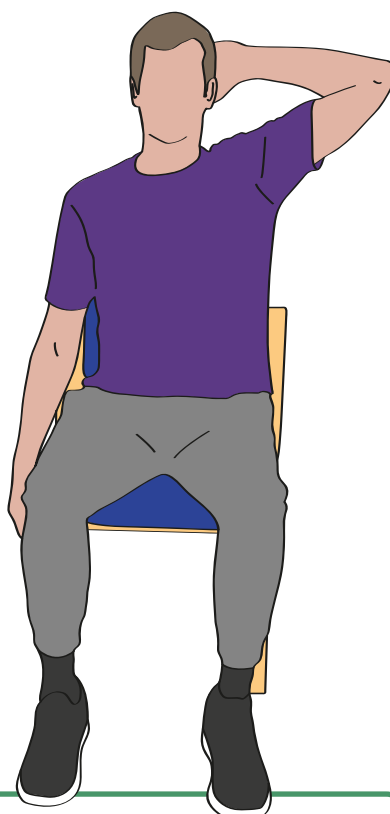
Exercises at home

Postural stretches and mobilisations

The following exercises help promote good posture by stretching muscles that become tight through poor postural positions when seated, and activate the groups of muscles which become weakened.

Neck extensions

- From the starting position, place one hand on the back of your head, keeping the head looking forward, and lightly push your head into your hand. Hold this position for a count of 10 seconds and relax for 10 seconds before repeating five times
- This activates the muscles at the front of the neck that becomes tight and actively stretches the muscles at the back of the neck



Tip If reaching behind the head is difficult, you can still perform this exercise without using your hand.

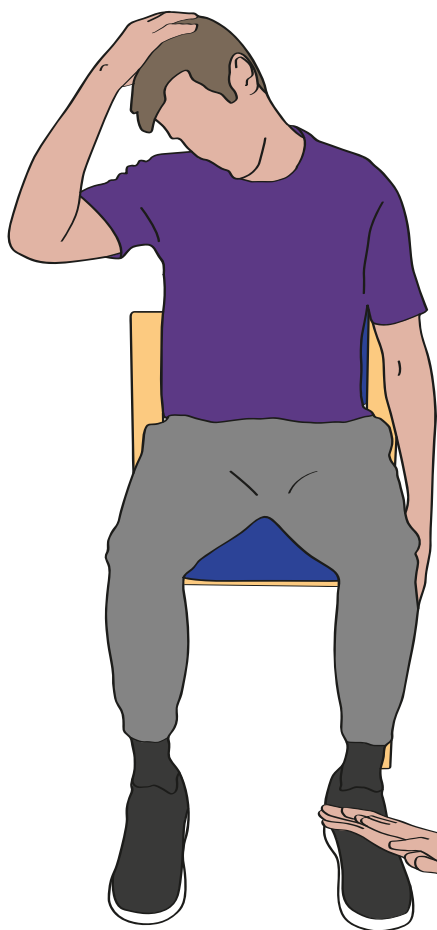


Start all exercises in sitting with a neutral position, so the trunk is upright away from the back of the chair. An imaginary straight line should be made through the centre of the ear, shoulders and hips.

Waiter's bow

- This next exercise practises keeping good posture during active movements
- With one hand placed on the small of the lower back and the other out in front (just below eyeline), slowly lean forward at the hip to a 45 degree angle. Keep the back straight and head in alignment.
- Slowly return to starting position. Complete this exercise 10 times, swapping arms between movements



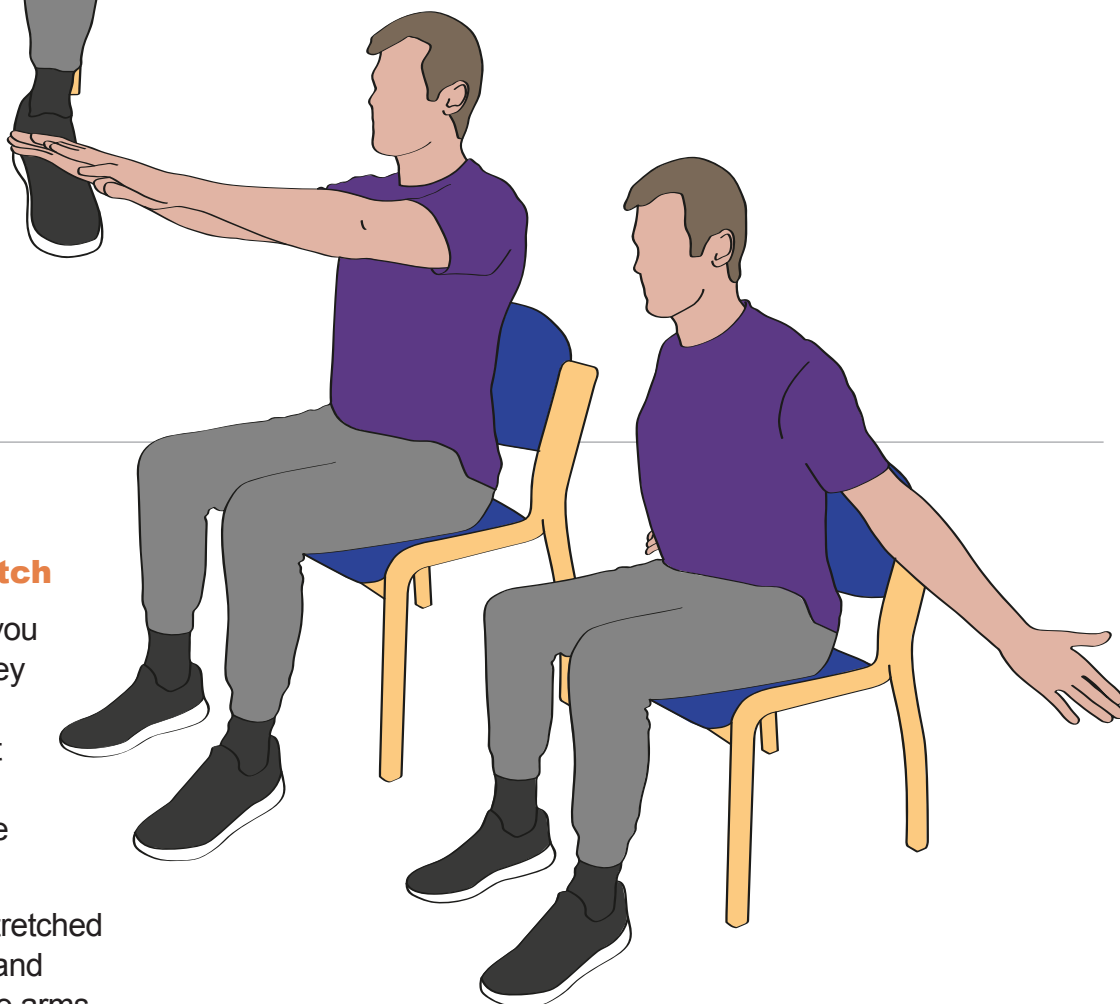


Neck stretch

- Keeping your head looking forward, bring your ear towards your shoulder and then turn your head so you look at the floor. You can use your hand to gently increase the stretch. You should feel

the stretch on the opposite side of the back of the neck. Hold for a count of 10-20 seconds (or for what feels comfortable) and repeat on the other side. Repeat again on both sides

Tip This is a great exercise to do a few times throughout the day whenever spending time sitting.



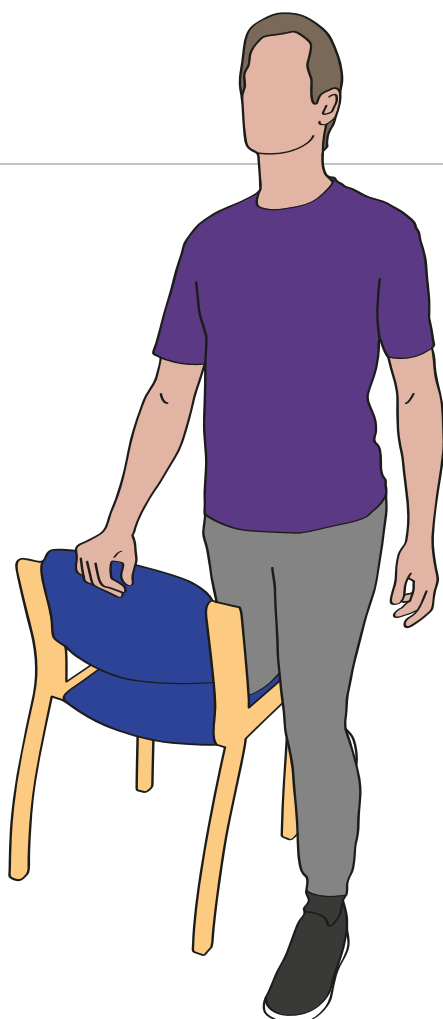
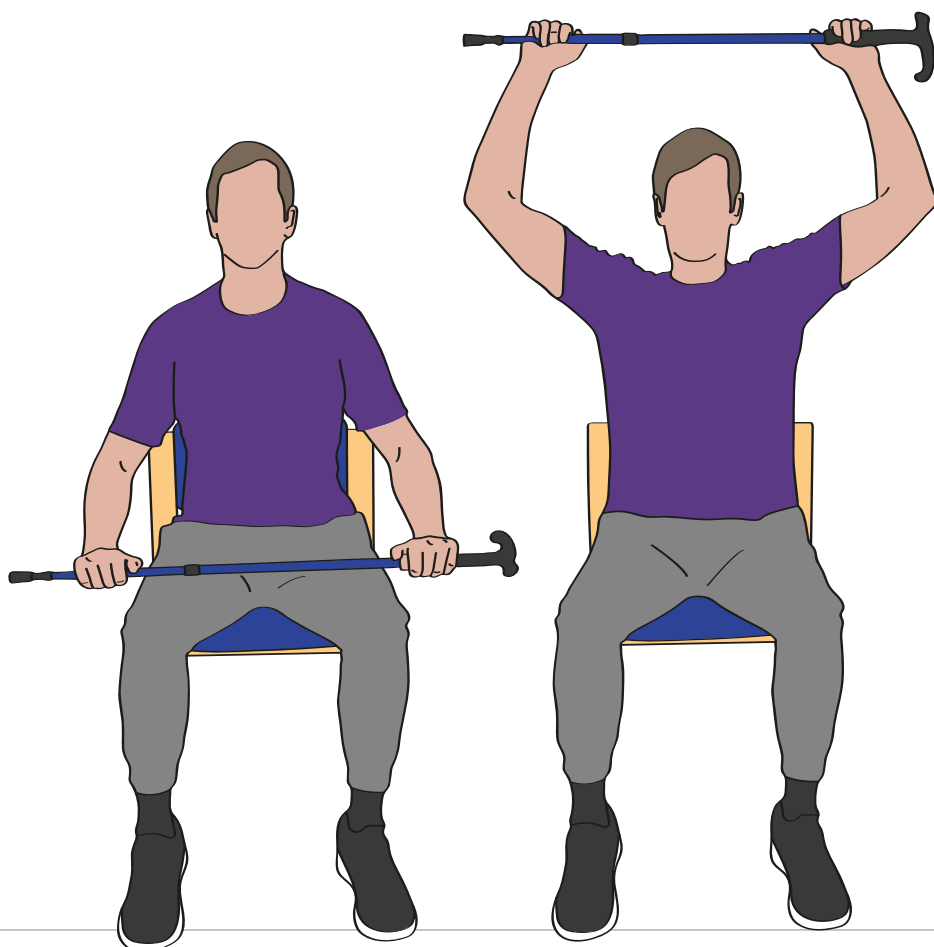
Active chest stretch

- This exercise gives you double for your money through actively stretching your chest whilst working the muscles between the shoulder blades
- With your arms outstretched in front, with control and avoiding swinging the arms, slowly lower the arms down to your side so hands finish behind you at hip level. Complete for a count of ten, rest and then repeat once more

Tip Make sure to squeeze the shoulder blades as you bring the arms out to the side. This will help activate the muscles between the shoulder blades and avoid a rounded posture.

Front shoulder raise

- In this exercise we use a stick but it can be performed without
- Holding a stick on your lap, hands wider than shoulder width, slowly raise to overhead (or as high as comfortable). Maintain good postural positioning throughout and slowly lower back to the starting position. A stretch should be felt in the chest. Repeat 10 times before resting and complete a second set.



Hip flexor stretch

- Standing with one knee bent on a chair, slowly push the hips forward to create a stretch across the front of the hip joint.

Hold for 30 seconds, relax the stretch for 10 seconds and repeat again on the same side. Change over and perform on the other leg

Tip This stretch can be performed on your side lying down by extending one leg to create the stretch.

For more exercises like this, please visit our website to find out more about our weekly online exercise sessions, which include exercises you will have seen in recent issues of New Pathways www.ms-uk.org/ms-uk-online or email us for more information register@ms-uk.org. Always consult with your doctor before attempting these exercises.