

Context:

'Your next posture is your best posture'- Don't spend too long in the same position at your desk. Take breaks whether that be walking to have a glass of water or cup of tea, talking to your colleague instead of email or walking around when on a phone call.

General rules:

1. Hold stretches for between 15-25 seconds. Most of the benefits of stretching happen within the first 15 seconds
2. Frequency is the key factor in reaping the benefits of stretching. So, aim for between 6-10 repetitions a day to be throughout the day
3. Stretches shouldn't cause pain
4. Complete stretches both sides.

Please be aware that these are generalised stretches. Depending on your own capabilities some of these stretches may not be appropriate for you.

Muscles that shorten with prolonged sitting:

- Hip flexors (iliopsoas): attaching from the onto the front of the lowest thoracic vertebrae top three lower back (lumbar) vertebrae and inserts onto the front of the femur. Shortens with sitting as legs are in a flexed position
- Pectorals (major and minor): shortens when continually internal rotating or inwardly rolling the shoulders with keyboard work
- SCM (sternocleidomastoid): action is to cause neck flexion (bending forward) which occurs when looking down at keyboard
- QL (quadratus lumborum): causes lumbar side-bending, so can shorten if leaning towards one side on your chair
- Wrist extensors: muscles that extend the wrist. Shortened with prolonged use.

Stretches that can be done near your desk:

Hip flexor Stretch

- Most effectively down on one knee (think proposal)
- Can also be done standing but won't be as effective
- Keeping trunk straight leaning into front leg
- Stretch should be felt close to where pockets sit.



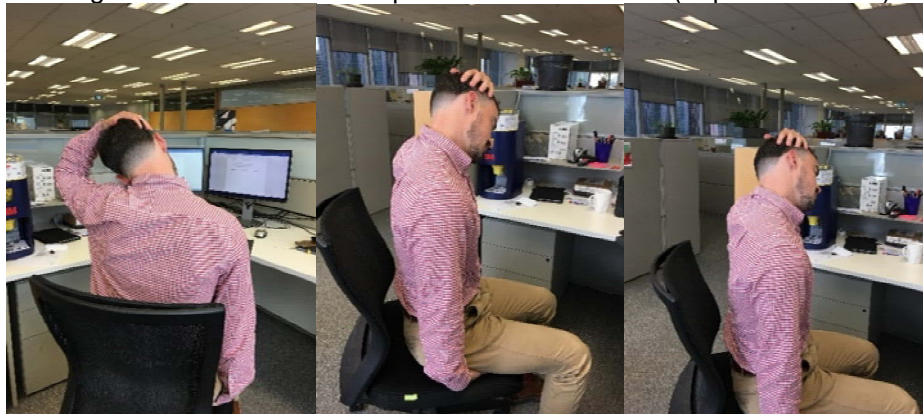
Pec Stretch

- Can be done bilaterally through a door frame.
- Can also be done individually on edge of wall, cardboard or post.
- Leaning or stepping into the stretch should increase the stretch.
- Less effectively can also be done seated, push arms behind yourself.



SCM/Trapezius Stretch

- Sitting on the hand of the side you are stretching.
- Side bending neck and just placing hand on top of the head for pressure (DO NOT PULL).
 - Bring head forward to stretch posterior neck muscles (trapezius muscle).



QL Stretch

- Made famous by Merv Hughes.
- Place leg of the side you are stretching behind your planted leg.
- Lean towards the side of the planted leg.
- You should feel the stretch on the side of your trunk.



Forearm Stretches

- Applying light over-pressure to stretch forearms both into extension and flexion.
- You shouldn't feel any pain through wrist or hands.
- The stretch should be felt through the forearm muscles.



Further Information:

If you have any questions regarding these stretches, feel free to ask Declan (Hazmat Officer and Osteopath).