



## LAMOPH June 2010 Department of Pennsylvania News Bulletin

### Neck Pain:

In general, there is no one cause of neck pain that applies to every sufferer. If you have chronic neck pain, you may have received a diagnosis of disc herniation, whiplash, strain, sprain or something else. Regardless, most of these conditions have one thing in common: Certain muscles are affected, and these are the muscles that need to be targeted before progressing to more challenging exercises or activities. There are certain muscles in the neck that are designed to help us maintain our normal and healthy curve of the spine. In addition, these muscles are designed to hold our head up all day.

The technical names of these are the longus capitus and longus colli, more commonly known as the deep neck flexors. They are the muscles that attach to the front of your spine. Because they're located deep in the front of the neck, we often ignore them. In people with chronic neck pain, these muscles are often fatigued a lot quicker than in people without neck pain. That means other muscles pick up the slack and begin working harder. The muscles that begin working harder are the ones we generally end up stretching. Have you ever noticed that when you stretch stiff muscles, they feel good for a short period of time, only to get tight again? The thing is, if you don't address the other muscles, the ones that get fatigued and gradually stop working, then your stretching program will not work as well. All these muscles need to be in "balance."

The best way to see if your deep neck flexors fatigue is to try and lift your head off the ground when you are lying down. The technique is simple: Simply tuck your chin in to your chest and lift your head off the ground, and then attempt to hold it there for 10 seconds. If the neck begins shaking, or your chin is unable to stay tucked in, your deep flexors are fatigued and need to be addressed. For most people with chronic neck pain, this can be a difficult exercise. That's why you can begin your exercise program by doing simple chin tucks while sitting or standing. Simply tucking your chin in and holding it until you fatigue will help reactivate these muscles. You can start with 6 repetitions of this exercise, working your way up to three sets of 6 repetitions each. Ensure you take adequate rest (several minutes) in between each set. Once you get comfortable with basic sitting/standing chin tucks, you can try doing the exercise lying down. The goal is to be able to do it 12 times, holding each one until you fatigue. The next goal is to work your way up to three sets of 12 repetitions, with rest in between each set. Then work your way to three sets of 15 repetitions and then three sets of 20 repetitions. Remember, this is a marathon, not a race. The goal is to increase the endurance of your muscles rather than their strength. Your neck is designed to carry the weight of your head all day, not to lift trains or buses! That's why building up endurance should be your first priority.

[Source: Health-E-News. Apr 2010 ++]

## **Have You Heard?**

### **Justice for all.**

Let's put the seniors in jail, and the criminals in nursing homes. This way the seniors would:

Have access to showers, hobbies, and walks.

Receive unlimited free prescriptions, dental and medical treatment, wheelchairs, etc.

Receive money instead of paying it out.

Have constant video monitoring, so they could be helped instantly if they fell or needed assistance.

Bedding would be washed twice a week, and all clothing would be ironed and returned to them.

Be checked every 20 minutes by a guard who would and bring their meals and snacks to their cell.

Have family visits in a suite built for that purpose.

Have access to a library, weight room, spiritual counseling, pool, and education.

Be provided, on request, at no charge simple clothing, shoes, slippers, P.J.'s and legal aid.

Have private, secure rooms for all, with an exercise outdoor yard -- with gardens.

Be allowed a personal computer, TV, radio, and daily phone calls.

Have a board of directors to hear complaints, and the guards would have a code of conduct, that would be strictly adhered to.

### **The Criminals would:**

Get cold food, be left all alone, and unsupervised.

Lights off at 8 p.m., and showers once a week.

Live in a tiny room and pay \$4,500.00 per month with no hope of ever getting out.