

Upper Body Stretches

The following exercises aim to improve flexibility of the arm, shoulder and upper back muscles.

Proper Stretching Technique

- **ALWAYS STRETCH BOTH SIDES EVENLY.** Don't stretch one side more than the other, unless recommended by your practitioner.
- Stretch slowly and smoothly. Hold each stretch for about thirty seconds then release gently. Never bounce or push a muscle beyond its ability.
- Avoid over-stretching. Never stretch to the point of pain or discomfort. You will feel a slight tension or pull on the muscle at the peak of the stretch.
- Don't forget to breathe. Using deep breaths will help you relax into the stretch. Never hold your breath while you stretch.

If you feel sharp pain at any time during these exercises, stop and seek further advice from the Chiro Clinic.



Triceps Stretch

Place one hand in the middle of your upper back. Bring the other hand up to hold onto the elbow and pull gently backwards.



Triceps Stretch (Apley's Scratch Exercise)

Place one hand between the shoulders as above and the other behind your back to meet in the middle. Secure your fingers together and gently pull the top arm backwards to stretch the tricep muscle. You should feel a stretch in the back of the upper arm.

If your hands do not meet use the previous exercise instead.



Deltoid Stretch

Bring one arm horizontally across your body and support with your other hand just above the elbow as shown. Gently pull the arm towards you as far as you can. You will feel a stretch on the outside of the upper arm.



Chest Stretch

From a standing position, place both hands behind you and interlock fingers. Straighten your arms and gently lift them both upwards. You will feel a stretch across your chest and shoulders. Be sure to keep shoulders down and back during this exercise.



Chest Stretch (Pectorals)

Place one hand against a wall directly to the side of you.

Keeping the hand secured in this place slowly turn your body away from the wall. You will feel a stretch across the front of your shoulder and chest.



This stretch can be done with the arm at any height. To stretch the lower pectoral muscles place the arm above shoulder height. With the arm below the shoulder the stretch will be more focussed on the upper pectoral muscles.

If you feel any sharp pain or pinching in the shoulder stop immediately.



Upper Back Stretch (Rhomboids)

Start standing or sitting. Place both hands in front of you interlocking your fingers and turn the palms to face away from your body.

Stretch the elbows and push hands as far forwards as possible.



From this position push the upper back as far backwards as possible. Allow the shoulders to rotate and upper back to curve forwards.

You will feel a stretch between the shoulder blades.



Forearm Stretch (Extensors)

Start standing or sitting. Place one arm out in front of you with the palm facing down. Hold the back of the hand with your other arm and gently push the hand down. You will feel a stretch in the top of the forearm.



Forearm Stretch (Flexors)

From the same position as above, turn the arm over so the palm is now facing up. Hold the fingers of your outstretched arm and gently pull the hand down. You will feel the stretch on the inside of your forearm.