

Head and neck exercises

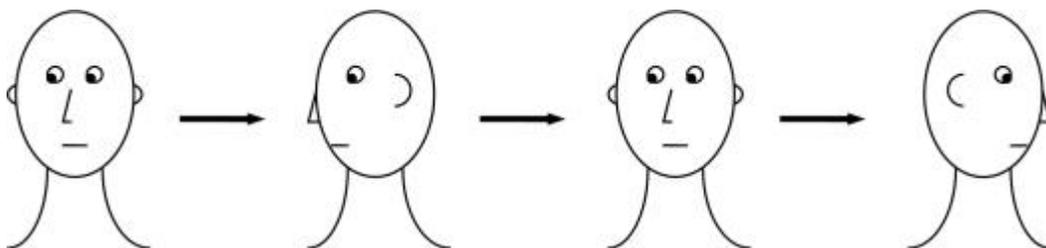
NB: These exercises are to be performed gently. If you experience any pain when carrying out these exercises, stop immediately and consult your speech-language pathologist or physician.

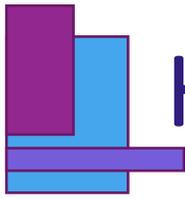
General instructions

- Make sure that you are standing or sitting in a relaxed, mid-line posture, i.e. sitting with the spine straight and not leaning to one side or the other.
- NEVER force these exercises. They are to be carried out GENTLY with EASY, SMOOTH MOVEMENTS.
- NEVER 'bounce' on the muscles repeatedly. Perform the movement smoothly, until you have reached your limit of movement and then STOP.
- Perform these exercises SLOWLY. They are not designed to build up strength. Rather, they are designed to INCREASE FLEXIBILITY and REDUCE MUSCLE TENSION.
- Only move your head in a HORIZONTAL or VERTICAL PLANE when performing the exercises.
- NEVER perform ROTATING MOVEMENTS of the head.

Exercise 1 (side-to-side)

1. Start with your head facing forwards.
2. Then move your head gently so that your chin moves towards your right shoulder, as if you are looking to the right.
3. Don't allow your head to drop – keep it moving in a horizontal plane.
4. When you have reached your limit, stop and return your head so that you are facing forwards again.
5. Then repeat by turning to your left, stopping at your limit, and then returning to face forwards.
6. Repeat the whole of the above 5 times.

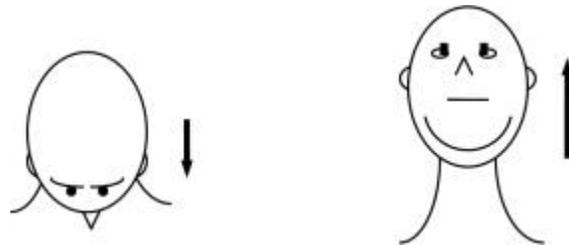




Head and neck exercises

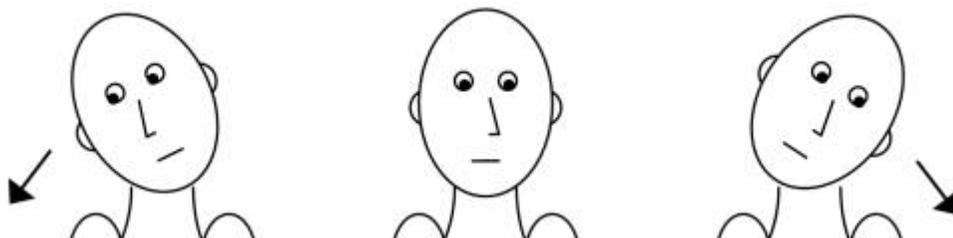
Exercise 2 (up-and-down)

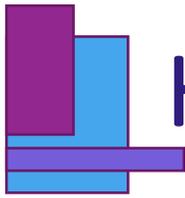
1. Start with your head facing forwards.
2. Drop your jaw so that your mouth is held open slightly in a relaxed posture.
3. Moving only in a vertical plane, allow your head to drop gently so that your chin is resting on, or is nearly resting on, your chest. Don't force your chin onto your chest if it does not reach.
4. Then gently raise your head so that you are facing forwards again.
5. Now, moving only in a vertical plane, gently put your head back as far as it will go without forcing or straining.
6. Then bring your head back so that you are facing forwards again.
7. Repeat the whole of the above 5 times.



Exercise 3 (ear-to-shoulder)

1. Start with your head facing forwards.
2. Then tilt your head gently so that your right ear moves towards your right shoulder – keep looking forwards – do not be tempted to twist to the side.
3. When you have reached your limit, stop and return your head so that you are facing forwards again.
4. Then repeat by tilting your left ear towards your left shoulder, stopping at your limit, and then returning to face forwards.
5. Repeat the whole of the above 5 times.

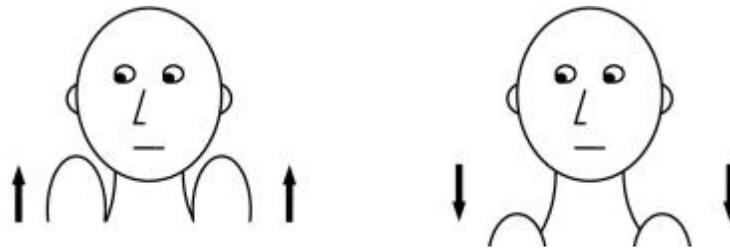




Head and neck exercises

Exercise 4 (shoulders up-and-down)

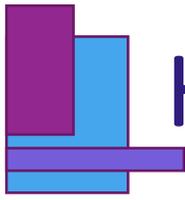
1. Start with your head facing forwards.
2. Gently raise both shoulders together towards your ears.
3. Now, begin to push both shoulders downwards.
4. Push down through your resting, mid-line position.
5. Then allow your shoulders to relax and they should both spring back upwards slightly.
6. Repeat this 5 times.



Exercise 5 (rotating one shoulder at a time)

1. Start with your head facing forwards.
2. Gently rotate the right shoulder forwards in small circular movements. Do this 5 times.
3. Now reverse the movement so that you rotate the right shoulder backwards in small circles. Do this 5 times.
4. Now repeat the forwards and backwards circular movements with the left shoulder, carrying out each rotation 5 times.
5. Be careful that as you lift one shoulder you do not slump over to the opposite side. Remember to remain in a relaxed, mid-line posture.





Head and neck exercises

Exercise 6 (rotating both shoulders together)

1. This exercise is the same as rotating one shoulder at a time except that, this time, you rotate both shoulders together.
2. Make 5 forward rotations, followed by 5 backward rotations.
3. Some people find this exercise more comfortable if they cross their forearms across their lap. Alternatively, just allow your hands to rest gently on your lap, or allow both arms to hang loosely at your sides.

