Basic Somatic Exercises for the Neck

Do each movement 3–5 times. Stop to rest whenever you feel you need it. Each time you rest, check how your body feels from side to side and in general, compared with how it felt when you started.

Position—On floor on stomach, hands near shoulders, forehead down on floor (Can also do these on hands and knees or do the ones on the floor first, then the ones on hands and knees (see Alternate Position below).

1. Raise head up, then forehead comes back down to floor and muscles at back of neck relax completely. Feel the muscles at the back of the neck contract and relax.

2. Turn head to right and raise off floor. Relax back down to floor, relaxing neck muscles completely. Feel the muscles at the side of the neck.

3. Turn head to left and raise off floor. Relax back down to floor, relaxing neck muscles completely.

Alternate Position—On hands and knees.

1. Contract muscles in back of neck and let head gradually go down, chin towards chest. Gradually move back up to position in line with spine.

2. Turn head to right. Contract back neck muscles, then slowly let head come all the way down, still turned to the right.

3. Turn head to left. Contract back neck muscles, then slowly let head come all the way down, still turned to the right.

New Position—On side, head on extended arm, bent knees

1. Bring top shoulder up towards your ear and then back to a relaxed position.

2. Take top shoulder down towards your top hip then back to a relaxed position.

3. Lift head up toward ceiling and then slowly lower.

4. Do same movements on the other side.

New Position—On back, knees bent

1. Keeping your chin tucked towards your chest, raise your head off the floor. Notice the sensations you feel in the muscles at the front of the neck.

2. Turn your head right and raise it off the floor. Notice the muscles on the right side of the neck.

3. Turn your head left and raise it off the floor. Notice the muscles on the left side of the neck.

Relax. Sit up and move your neck in all directions.