

Practice these tips and techniques and incorporate them into your daily routines to improve your habits! Awareness of your body and how it is moving will not only contribute to achieving the goals in your plan of care, but can also help prevent a reoccurrence of your original injury or dysfunction!

Cold Pack/Hot Pack

- Can be used on back of neck and low back simultaneously or individually.
- For stress reduction and a more restful sleep, use 30 minutes before bed in a dark, quiet room free from distractions and electronic devices.
- Start with placing a heating pad/hot pack on the chest or abdomen (place on hips if high blood pressure).
- Place cold pack on back of neck and/or low back.
- Leave the heating pad/pack and cold pack on for about 20 minutes, or until you no longer feel the cold.
- Can be repeated several times a day if needed.



Frozen Water Bottle



- This can be used to treat trigger point flare ups or tight muscles. Use a sock over the bottle to keep the hands from getting too cold.
- For trigger point work, depending on the area, you can place the bottle over the pain area and press until you feel release/ease of pain. A wall can also be used to assist for the hard to reach areas like the buttock or low back. Find the sore area, place the bottle on the pain and lean into the wall for pressure. This should take about 30 to 90 seconds.



- For tight muscles like the IT band, take the bottle and move downward with a gliding movement and light to medium pressure, starting from the hip to the knee. Can repeat several times.
- A good way to release the plantar fascia in the feet or to treat tired/pained feet is to place the bottle underneath the arch of the foot and roll the bottle back and forth a few times with deep/firm pressure.

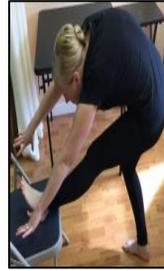
Avoid Over-stretching

- Over stretching can cause a muscle to spasm or flare up, exacerbating pain/tightness.
- The body's main response to a feeling of a "tight" or "sore" muscle is to stretch. If there are imbalances causing the sense of tightness/soreness, stretching may bring immediate relief, but the tightness/soreness will likely come back (and sometimes feel worse) after a short period of time.

Correct:



Incorrect:



Recommended: place a frozen water bottle on the sore/tight area and with a gentle but firm pressure, move the bottle up/down and side to side until you feel the tightness/soreness diminish. Afterward, a gentle lengthening can be done, but only to a point of light resistance to prevent spasms.

Correct Driving Posture/Getting In and Out of the Car



Trash bag for ease of swiveling



Hand positioning



Proper way to get in and out of car

- Use a back support (lumbar roll) at the curve of your low back. Your knees should be at the same level or higher than your hips.
- Move the seat close to the steering wheel to support your low back. The seat should be close enough that your knees are bent and your feet can reach the pedals.
- Use a swivel maneuver. Back yourself into your car and swing your legs into a forward-facing position. Do the reverse to get out.
- Buy a beaded seat cover, which not only makes long drives more comfortable but also helps you "roll" in and out of your seat.
- Bag it! Place large trash bag in the car seat. Getting in and out of the car is easier because the bag slides with you.

Putting on Pants

- Sit in a comfortable chair and place feet flat on the floor.
- Using both hands to hold the waistband, insert the foot through the pant leg bringing it up to the knee.
- Repeat with the other leg.
- Once both pant legs are on and up to the knees, stand up from the chair (you can use the arm rests of the chair or a surrounding table/dresser) and pull the pants up to the waist.



Proper Sleeping Positions

Lying on side: need 3 pillows. One for the neck, one between the knees and one to hug.

- When sleeping on your side you want the neck pillow to support your head so that it is in a neutral position with your spine (not too thin and not too thick). You want the pillow to be bunched up around the neck so that your shoulder isn't being compressed and your head is comfortably positioned.
- The knee pillow needs to be thick enough so that your lower extremities are in a neutral parallel position. The pillow will be between your knees and slightly bent.
- The arm pillow can be used to keep the top shoulder from rolling in. By hugging the pillow it prevents the body and shoulder from twisting.

Lying on back: need 2 pillows. One pillow for the knees and the second for your neck.

- The knee pillow needs to be fairly thick, anywhere from 2-4 inches.
- The knee pillow is placed underneath the knees when lying down.
- The neck pillow needs to be able to support the curve of the neck.
- The shoulders should not be on the pillow but slightly underneath.
- The arms can be placed at your sides or folded over the belly.



Getting out of Bed

- To start, move your body close to the edge of the bed.
- Bend your knees, keeping them together with your feet flat on the bed.
- Roll onto your side (you can use your top hand to help push you onto your side if needed, remembering to keep your spine straight – no twisting!)
- Once you are on your side, use one hand to support your head while the elbow and opposite hand push you into a sitting position.
- Let your legs swing down onto the floor.
- When you are ready to stand, lean forward. Take a deep breath. As you breathe out, activate your abdominal/stomach muscles so your core is supporting your trunk. Using your arms and legs, push yourself up into a standing position.



Carrying Purse/Backpack or Pulling Suitcase

Carrying a Purse:

- Pack light! Heavy bags put strain on your shoulders.
- Switch shoulders so you don't get into the habit of overusing one side.
- If your purse is heavy, hold it in your hand and switch between hands.
- A better option is to wear a purse across the body so there is an even distribution. Switch between shoulders.

Backpack:

- Wear both straps around shoulders so weight is distributed evenly.



Pulling suitcase:

The best option is to have a suitcase with wheels. Push the suitcase in front of you so that your shoulder is not straining by the pull. Can switch hands to decrease overuse of one side.



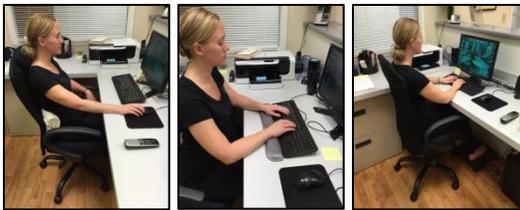
Proper Standing Posture



- Avoid standing in the same position for a long time.
- When standing, try to elevate one foot by resting it on a stool or box. After several minutes, switch your foot position.
- While working in the kitchen, open the cabinet under the sink and rest one foot on the inside of the cabinet. Change feet every 5 to 15 minutes.



Proper Desk Posture



- Plant your feet firmly on the floor slightly in front of you. If they don't reach the floor easily, get a foot rest. Distribute your weight evenly on both hips.
- Place your lower legs perpendicular to the floor and your thighs at a 90 degree angle to your lower legs.
- Support your low back with your chair back and/or a lumbar roll, or rolled-up towel.
- Lift up your sternum (breastbone) - the opposite of slouching.
- Keep your shoulders relaxed, hold your forearms at a 90 degree angle to your upper arm for typing or writing, and keep your wrists loose and straight (not flexed or extended).



- Don't just sit there! Get up and move at least once every hour.
- Avoid repetitive gripping of the mouse. Support your wrist and forearms with a gel pad or wrist support. Center your keyboard in front of your monitor with your eyes at the same level as the tool bar.
- When sitting in a chair that rolls, don't twist at the waist while sitting. Instead, turn your whole body.

Proper Phone & Standing Posture

- Don't cradle the phone between your head and shoulder. Hold the telephone receiver in one hand, and at intervals, use the opposite hand to hold the receiver (not changing ears) to vary the tilt of the head. The best solution is to use a headset or speaker phone.
- When standing up from the sitting position, move to the front of the seat of your chair. Stand up by straightening your legs. Avoid bending forward at the waist.

