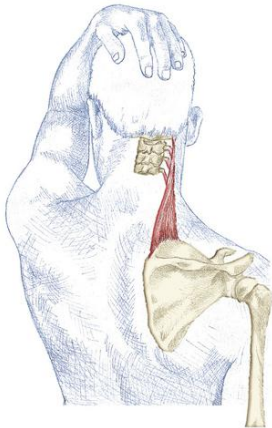


# Stop & Take an **ERGO** Break

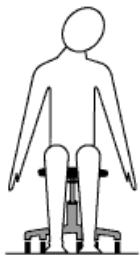

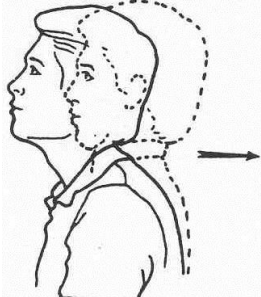
## #3: Neck



One of the most common sources of neck pain is a **forward head and shoulder posture**. Forward head posture is when the neck slants forward placing the head in front of the shoulders. This position is often accompanied by forward shoulders and a rounded upper back, attributing to both neck and shoulder pain.

The **levator scapula** is a muscle that rotates and tilts the head to the side. It often becomes tight and may be very tender where it attaches to the shoulder blade. Stretching the levator scapula is important for eliminating neck pain.

Here are a number of neck exercises that will help stretch muscles that are commonly overworked at an office desk related job. Do not do any stretches that cause pain.

<p>Side Neck Rotation</p> 	<p>Drop your head slowly to the left, trying to touch your left ear to your left shoulder. Hold for 5 – 10 sec. Repeat on the right side. Slowly drop your chin to your chest, turn your head all the way to the left, then turn all the way to the right.</p> <p>Repeat 2 – 3 times.</p>
<p>Levator Scapula Stretch</p> 	<p>Sit on a chair with your feet wide apart and your back straight. Place your hand behind you diagonally and rotate your head 45°. Bring your head down toward your left knee without hunching over.</p> <p>Resist by pressing your head into your hand. Hold for 5 – 10 sec. Deepen the stretch by slowly pulling your head toward your chest in the direction of your knee until you reach a new ending point.</p> <p>Repeat 2 – 3 times.</p>
<p>Neck Retraction</p> 	<p>When sitting or standing, pull the upper back and head back. It is important to make sure that the chin is down so that the head is pulled straight back and is not looking up.</p> <p>Hold for 5 -10 sec. Repeat 7 – 10 times a day.</p>

References: <http://www.ccohs.ca/>, <http://www.humankinetics.com/>, <http://www.spine-health.com/>