

# Tips to Prevent Repetitive Stress Injury



People are meant to move. Remaining in one position and doing repetitive tasks (typing, small parts assembly, crafts) can cause repetitive stress injury (RSI) to the muscles, tendons and nerves.

The following gentle exercises will help prevent injury by giving your body a break, relaxing tight muscles, and bringing blood (food and oxygen) to the tissues that need it most.

## When to do these exercises

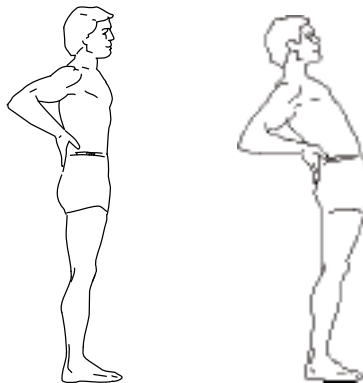
For best results, do exercises hourly while you are working and at each break. Remember to take breaks from hobbies, too.

## How to do these exercises

Do each exercise slowly and smoothly; never bounce or jerk. Hold each stretch for 5 seconds, take a breath, and then stretch a little farther. Hold 5 more seconds before returning to the start position. Repeat 2-3 times. If the exercise hurts, you are stretching too far. Go back to the point where you feel a stretch, not pain.

### 1. Stand and Stretch

Look straight ahead and bend backwards slightly, supporting yourself with your hands on your hips.



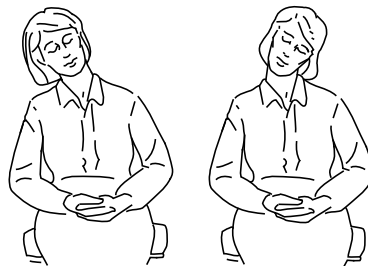
### 2. Think Tall

Stretch tall when sitting or standing, as if you have a string attached to the top of your head pulling you up.



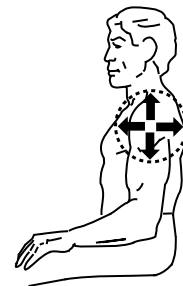
### 3. Head Tip

Sit tall, tip head to one side, then the other side.



### 4. Shoulder Circle

Move shoulders in a large circle - up, back, down, forward.

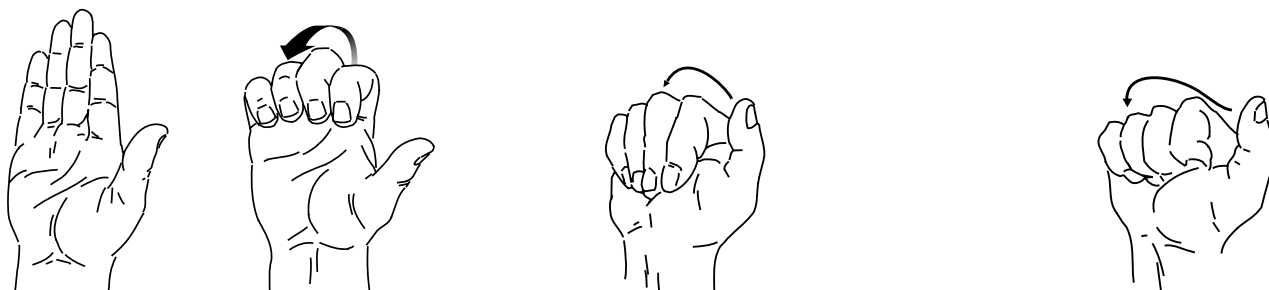


## 5. Hand Stretch

**Form a “hook”** (hold fingers and wrist straight, then bend fingers *without bending large knuckles* – like a hook). **Open hand.**

**Form a flat fist** (bend your fingers *at the middle joints*, touching fingertips to palm). **Open hand.**

**Form a round fist** (bend your fingers into a *full fist*, keeping your thumb away from your hand). **Open hand.**



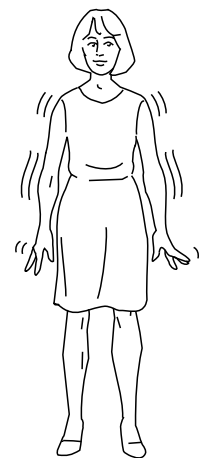
## 6. Back Squeeze

Sit tall, hands up, move elbows down and back (elbows to back pockets).



## 7. Loosen Up

Stand and let your arms hang at your sides. Gently wiggle your fingers, wrists, elbows and shoulders.



## Other resources

- Connect to our Web site at [kp.org](http://kp.org) to access health and drug encyclopedias, interactive programs, Healthy Living classes, and much more.
- Contact your Kaiser Permanente Health Education Center or Department for health information, programs, and other resources.
- View our SmartMoves program for tips on computer set-up. Go to [kp.org/mydoctor](http://kp.org/mydoctor) and look under “Healthy Living Resources” online programs.

This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other health care professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult with your doctor.