

# The Importance of Neck Exercises

Neck pain and stiffness is common following thyroid surgery. The neck is composed of vertebrae and ligaments that supply stability to the spine, and muscles that provide support and allow motion. The neck is very vulnerable because it is less protected than the rest of the spine, it supports the head, and it is very flexible. During your surgery, the neck is extended (bent backwards) for the duration of the procedure which may be for several hours. This can cause muscle spasm which then leads to pain and tension in the neck. People with pre-existing neck problems such as cervical spondylosis or a previous whiplash injury are more susceptible. Exercising the neck muscles before and after your surgery significantly reduces the risk of muscle strain and subsequent neck strain.

You should perform the following exercises **FOR 10 COUNTS EACH, TWICE DAILY, FOR 10 DAYS BEFORE AND 10 DAYS AFTER** your surgery. Exercises should be done until a gentle tension is felt. Do not bounce or the muscle will tighten up more. It is important to return to the central position. If you are being treated by a physiotherapist or doctor for neck pain then please seek their advice first before commencing these exercises.

## The Neck Exercises

### 1. FLEXION/ROTATION

(Sternocleidomastoid Muscle)



Tuck chin to chest.  
Rotate to left, then centre, then right.  
Repeat 10 times

### 2. FLEXION/EXTENSION

(Posterior Neck Muscles)



Tuck chin to chest (flexion).  
Feel stretch in back of neck and then  
push back (extension) as far as possible.  
Repeat 10 times

### 3. LATERAL SIDE BENDS

(Scalene Muscles and Upper Trapezius Muscle)



Place head to right side.  
You can use right hand to add extra  
stretch.  
Lowering left shoulder will also intensify  
stretch.  
Repeat 10 times  
Repeat on the other side.

### 4. LATERAL SIDE SHOULDER SHRUGS

(Trapezius Muscle and Levator Scapulae)



Elevate shoulders to neck.  
Repeat 10 times

## Professor Stan Sidhu

ENDOCRINE SURGEON

MBBS FRACS PhD

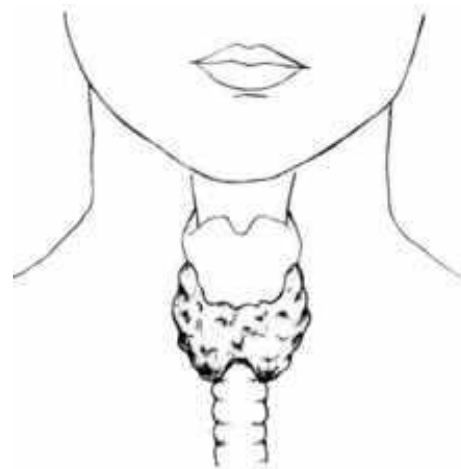
Phone: 02 9437 1731

Mobile: 0400 817 023

E-mail: [stansidhu@nebsc.com.au](mailto:stansidhu@nebsc.com.au)

Website: [www.drstansidhu.com](http://www.drstansidhu.com)

Suite 202, Level 2, AMA House  
69 Christie Street  
St Leonards NSW 2065



## ENDOCRINE SURGICAL UNIT

Professor Stan Sidhu

[www.drstansidhu.com](http://www.drstansidhu.com)

## Neck exercises for Thyroid, Parathyroid & Parotid surgery

Royal North Shore Hospital  
Mater Hospital  
Sydney Adventist Hospital  
Hornsby Hospital  
Baringa Hospital  
Coffs Harbour Base Hospital

