

10 Stretches to Save Your Spine

Recommended by Chicago Institute of Neurosurgery and Neuroresearch

- 1. SHOULDER AND CHEST STRETCH:** Clasp your hands behind your back with palms facing in. Slowly raise and straighten your arms. Hold for several seconds, then slowly release. Repeat 3 times.
- 2. CHEST STRETCH:** Put your fingers behind your head and squeeze your shoulder blades together until you feel tension through your upper back, then slowly release. Repeat 3 times.
- 3. TORSO STRETCH:** Raise your elbows while keeping your hips stationary. Twist your upper body at your waist to the right. Hold for several seconds, then repeat on your left side. Repeat 3 times on each side.
- 4. SHOULDER STRETCH:** Stretch your right arm across your upper body. Pull your right elbow toward your left shoulder. Hold for several seconds, and then reverse arms. Repeat 3 times.
- 5. SIDE STRETCH:** Clasp your hands above your head. While stretching your hands palms upwards, slowly lean to the right, then to the left. Do not arch your back, and keep your knees slightly bent. Repeat 3 times on each side.
- 6. CALF STRETCH:** Lean against a support such as a rail with your right leg forward and your left leg back. Bend your right knee, and keep your left leg straight. With the heel of your left leg on the floor, slowly move your hips forward until you feel a stretch in your left calf. Hold for 30 seconds and release. Repeat 3 times on each leg.
- 7. FINGER STRETCH:** Extend and separate your fingers until you feel the stretch. Hold this position for 5 seconds. Relax, then gently bend your fingers.
- 8. BACK STRETCH:** Stretch your left hand down behind your left shoulder, while bringing your right hand up your back from below. Slowly move your hands as close together as possible and hold. Release after several seconds, then reverse arms. Repeat 3 times on each side.
- 9. NECK STRETCH:** Tuck your chin slowly into your neck, and hold for 2 seconds then release. This counteracts the effects of leaning forward to stare at a computer.
- 10. LEG STRETCH:** Sit up straight and extend your legs out from your body. Hold this position for several seconds, then release. Repeat 3 times.