

### 3 SIMPLE EXERCISES YOU CAN DO TO RELIEVE AND PREVENT THE 3 MOST COMMON PAIN ISSUES.

#### What exactly is PAIN?

Before trying out these exercises, you'll have to have a basic understanding of what pain really is. Pain is purely a manifestation of the brain. You don't actually need to experience any physical damage in your body in order for you to deal with pain, even if it's a chronic issue. In the world of neurology, we describe pain as a lack of awareness within the 'brain-body mapping systems' in the brain, which is usually due to the fact that we move a lot less as we get older and work more than we play. In short, pain is caused by what we call "gaps in the map," and when these gaps occur they can set off your body's alarm system... PAIN. Movement can fill those gaps making your pain disappear.

#### What Causes These Gaps?

The repetitive nature of your work and the neglect of other movements that eventually create these so called gaps. Gaps in the map lead to imbalances within your musculature which then lead to pain, stiffness, and loss of strength.

Just moving around can help, but here are a few specific movement drills you can do an time to prevent three of the most common types of pain.

## 3 Easy Mobility Drills

#### Back Pain?

##### Drill: Upper Back Mobility "Thoracic Glides"

The thoracic spine (the part of the spine where all your ribs connect) works in opposition to your lumbar spine (lower back). The better it moves, the better your lumbar will move!

1. Stand as tall as you can, tuck your chin in slightly, breath in, and bring your chest up into the air to extend your thoracic spine.
2. Then exhale, cave your chest in to flex your spine toward the wall behind you, and do your best to keep your shoulders relaxed.



*Repeat this for 3 to 5 repetitions.*

## Hip and Sciatic Pain?

### Drill: Ankle Circles in bent hip position

Throughout the day gravity pulls fluid down into your legs and when that happens your sciatic nerve can get the squeeze. The following drill puts you in a position where you should feel a little stretch in your hip or the area of tightness. The ankle circles will then gently floss the branches of the sciatic nerve through the tight tissues in your leg. This slight movement can increase circulation, decrease inflammation, and get those tight muscles to loosen up.

1. Place one foot on the floor in front of you. Lean your weight back on your heels and straighten the front knee until you begin to feel a light stretch.
2. Once you do, begin performing slow ankles circles in each direction to facilitate the stretch.

*TIP: Make the ankle circles really slow! Perform 3-5 reps on each side, 2 or 3 times per day.*



## Neck and Shoulder Pain?

### Drill: Trap Flex and Stretch

Sometimes, when a muscle is tight it just needs to be contracted (shortened) and stretched (lengthened) in order to give your brain and idea of what's going on in the area.

1. Contract the muscle by turning your hand and arm outward. Shrug your shoulder, look up, and tilt your head toward your shoulder.
2. Then turn your hand and arm inward bringing it across the front of your body. Allow your shoulder to drop and turn forward while tilting and turning your head down and away from the shoulder. This will fully contract and stretch the trapezius muscles which are the usual culprits of neck and shoulder pain. *Try these steps 3 to 5 times, slowly.*



*\*\*\* Safety Precaution: Never move into pain! Make sure these drills only create a slight stretch. An easy rule of thumb to abide by to ensure you don't make things worse is - if it makes you wince, the stretch is to great. If pain occurs decrease the range of motion and decrease the speed of your movement.*