

Follow the instructions below to get the most out of your noodle:

Uses for the posturenoodle include:

- Sitting spinal support
- Neck support/stretch
- Forward head position
- Low back/hip flexor stretch

(Please Note: these exercise instructions are a generic guide to the use of the posturenoodle. If you are in any doubt as to whether they are suitable for your level of health or fitness - please consult your chiropractor/physiotherapist or general practitioner before commencing)

Low back support:

The posturenoodle doesn't just support your lower back - it supports the whole spine. Its firm yet small cylindrical shape allows it to be placed in the curve of your lower back - preventing slouching not only in the low back but of the neck and shoulders as well.

To make sure you position your posturenoodle effectively try the steps below the first few times you use it.

Step 1: Sit towards the front edge of your chair and put your hand behind your lower back.

Step 2: Keeping your hand on your lower back alternate between slouching forward and sitting tall and upright. You will feel your low back push outwards when you slouch and sink inwards when your sitting tall.

Step 3: Place the posturenoodle in the part of the low back you feel push out the furthest. (If unsure- start by placing the noodle equal to the level of the top of your hip bones -below your ribs but above your sacrum) You can make subtle positioning adjustments later.

Step 4: with the posturenoodle now in place against your back move your bottom back as far as you comfortably can into the chair and once in place let go of the posturenoodle and relax. The posturenoodle does all the work for you.

Please note that it is actually normal for you not to be touching the back rest of the chair. By working with the natural shape of the spine and how they interact with each other the posturenoodle acts as a support for the whole of your back. It doesn't need to be resting against anything! - Cool isn't it!

Neck support/stretch:

You can use the posturenoodle as a great way to relieve neck and shoulder tension that builds up throughout the day. The soft springy cover and the small size of the posturenoodle make it the perfect tool to support your neck and to allow the tight shoulder and neck muscles (including those hard to stretch muscles at the front) to relax and lengthen - ready to fight another day.

Here is how:

Step 1: Lay down on your bed (or for a bigger stretch or if you are a bigger person - lay on a exercise mat or soft carpet) with your legs either out straight or slightly bent depending on comfort level. No pillow is used for the neck - so put it to one side.

Use your noodle -
the total spinal support

Step 2: Lift your head and place the posturenoodle under your neck between the top of your shoulders and the bottom of your skull. Slowly lower your head allowing your neck to relax over the top of the posturenoodle.

Step 3: Once you are in position tuck your chin down a bit so that your head is not over extended. This reduces the stress in the upper neck and makes the stretch more enjoyable.

Step 4: To increase the benefit of this stretch place your arms on the ground beside you with your palms facing upwards. This creates a stretch in the pectoral muscles of your chest which when are tight cause an increased hunch and rounding of the shoulders. These muscles also attach up into your shoulder and can cause pins and needles in your arms for example when your arm goes to sleep when you have been sleeping with your hand above your head! Start with the arms only 20 or 30 degrees out from your side and increase over time. The further your arms are out to the side the bigger the stretch. But remember - Palms up and just relax the arms and shoulders

Start doing this exercise 4 or 5 times a week for only 2-3 minutes each time. The time can be built up to 15 - 20 minutes max. If you experience discomfort afterwards decrease the amount of time you hold the position for.

If you experience dizziness or nausea do not do this exercise.

Forward head position:

You may not call it this but you see it everywhere. It's normally a result of poor postural habits over many years - especially in those who work in front of a computer or at a desk all day. (but not when you use your posturenoodle)

When you look at people (or yourself) standing normally and their head is jutting out in front of them - that's the forward head position we are talking about. And it doesn't just look bad. It creates breathing difficulties, causes headaches and TMJ (jaw) problems, increases muscle fatigue and even the amount of wear and tear on the bones of the neck and upper back. It has even been shown that for every 2 -3 cms forward the head moves the weight and stress on the shoulder and neck muscles doubles. Not good!

So lets work against that shall we.

Step 1: Grab your trusty posturenoodle and stand with your back facing but not touching a wall and with feet normal distance apart.

Step 2: Place the posturenoodle (running lengthways down your spine) between your shoulder blades and lean gently against the wall to hold it in position.

Step 3: Glide your head backwards whilst keeping your chin tucked in as if you are trying to touch the wall behind you (which you probably wont get near - but that doesn't matter).

Breath normally and keep your shoulders relaxed as you hold this for at least 10 seconds. Relax and repeat 10 times.

You should feel a couple of things with this exercise.

One great thing is that you will eventually feel a stretching like pressure in the upper back where the

posturenoodle rests between your shoulder blades. This is great because this the area that cops a lot of the stress from a forward head position.

The next great thing is that you will often feel a stretch in the muscles under your skull as you hold your head back with your chin down. This is great because a lot of those pesky tension headaches are caused by irritation to these muscles.

The other cool thing that happens is that you are actively strengthening the big posture muscles of your back as you do this simple exercise. It's a great work out that is done in less then 2 minutes!

Low back/hip flexor stretch:

This is one of my favourite exercises for helping reduce the symptoms and frequency of low back pain. The curve that the posturenoodle supports when sitting is the same curve we are trying to improve and stretch with this exercise.

There are also big muscles in the front of our hips and groin area that play a huge role in back problems. These muscles are the hip flexors (especially guilty is the psoas muscles). They attach to your lower spine at many levels and run down to the hips. They are constantly shortened when sitting and rarely do we stretch them out with our daily activities - so introduce the posturenoodle one more time:

Step 1: Lay on your bed one more time with your knees bent up. (being on the bed allows for the posturenoodle to sink partially into the mattress and yet still provide a good stretch. Doing on the floor or mat may mean the stretch is too strong)

Step 2: Place the posturenoodle so it runs across your lower back - placing the noodle equal to the level of the top of your hip bones -below your ribs but above your sacrum. This is the same spot that you feel the small curve in of your low back when you place your hand under your spine when laying down.

Step 3: Relax your stomach muscles. If you hold them tight it wont allow your low back and hip flexors to stretch - so just let go.

Step 4: If you are comfortable in this position slowly straighten your legs out. This is when the hip flexors become stretched. Again, make sure you keep your stomach muscles relaxed. Hold this position for 2-3 minutes to begin with but you can slowly increase the time as you improve - up to 15 minutes.

Note that when starting this exercise at times you may feel a little stiff in the low back immediately after getting up. This is due to the muscles and spine being held in one position for an extended time and should fade quickly with movement.

Discovered a new way to use your noodle?

If you have found other great uses for your posturenoodle why not let us know about them - send an email with a description or photo to us and tell us what you do.

Thank you