

Thoracic Pain



Pain in the thoracic (upper) area of the back is common in people who spend long periods bent forwards and those who lift constantly. Symptoms can include pain between the shoulder blades, but may radiate to the chest and make deep breathing difficult. Pain can hinder your sport, work, day-to-day activities such as dressing and even sleeping.



The thoracic spine is the portion of the spinal column that corresponds to your chest. There are 12 vertebrae in the middle of the spine with ribs attached to either side. From the side, the thoracic spine is slightly concave.

Do you suffer from:

- Burning between the shoulder blades
- Stiff back
- Pain when coughing, sneezing or breathing deeply.
- Headache

This can be caused by:

Stiff joints - The ligaments joining the vertebrae can become overstretched and strained with chronic poor posture.

Muscle spasm - resulting from poor posture or jerking and twisting manoeuvres.

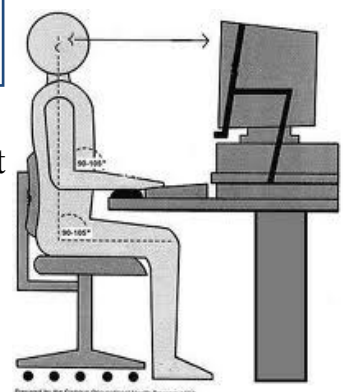
PREVENTION is the key:

- ✓ Good Posture
- ✓ Keep your head erect
- ✓ Practise shoulder blades down and together
- ✓ Set-up your office.

Ask your physiotherapist how.

Early treatment including massage, joint mobilisation or manipulation, stretches and exercises from a trained physiotherapist is the key to help determine the cause and resolve your pain.

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Here are some sample **exercises** for thoracic pain:

Shoulder Blade Posture Correction:

- Gently squeeze your shoulder blades back and down together.
- Hold 5 seconds, Complete 5 times, twice a day.

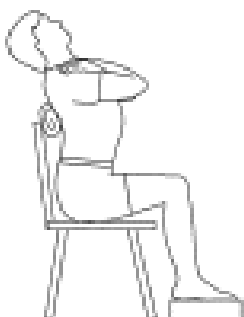


Thoracic Extension Stretches

- These two exercise gently arch the upper back to create a nice stretch.
- Lying on your back with a small towel horizontally between your shoulder blades. Hold 30-60seconds.



- Sitting, gently arch back over the top of the chair, hold 5-10seconds



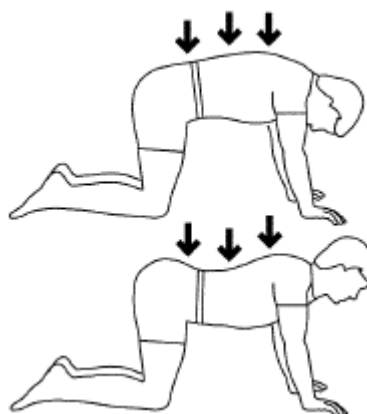
Rotation Stretches:

- Gently turn to one side. Hold 5 seconds, Complete twice each side, 3-4 times day.



Arching Stretches:

- In kneeling, arch back up to ceiling, hold for 5 seconds, then slowly down to floor, hold 5 seconds. Repeat 3-5 times.



These exercises have been provided as a guide. In the absence of a visit with a qualified health care professional information in this handout must be considered as an educational service only.

Sapphire Coast Physiotherapy are happy to discuss your thoracic pain further. A physiotherapist can complete a thorough assessment of your back and symptoms to develop the best treatment plan to treat your symptoms. For more information, or for an appointment, please phone your nearest clinic.

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