

Guidelines for: Stretches-Exercises-Massage

STOP and report if you feel: Dizziness, nausea, visual changes, pins & needles, numbness or increasing pain

Below applies to **most** situations – see also individual exercise notes for more detail

How hard do I push?

- **Stretches & Exercises:** Mild-moderate tension/effort. Some low-level discomfort is okay
- **Massage:** Mild-moderate pressure. Firm enough work/move/compress the target tissue. Some low-level discomfort is okay.

How long do I apply?

- **Stretches:** Hold for 10 seconds (7 seconds for children)
- **Exercises:** Aim for steady controlled movement in both the 'contraction' and 'relaxation' phase, use full joint range where possible, hold end point 2-3 seconds
- **Massage:** 20-30 seconds per 5cm² area is plenty. Overall time depends on how many 'areas' to cover.

How many repeats (reps) per set?

- **Stretches:** 1 stretch per set, may include both 'Left & Right' sides or 'Up & Down'.
- **Exercises:** Enough repeats to be challenging i.e., require 'moderate-high' effort toward the end of each set. But, not so many reps that prevent good technique and good form, or causes pain. As a guide: 5-10 reps per set for beginners, 15-20 reps per set after 2-4 weeks.

How many sets per session?

- **Stretches:** 3 sets. A 10-20 second rest between sets if not alternating with another movement
- **Exercises:** 3 sets. A 1-2 minute rest between sets

Some soreness after Stretching, Exercise or Massage is okay if it is:

- mild – doesn't negatively affect your ability to carry out your duties
- short lived – less than 2 hours
- gets less with subsequent applications in the same area

Stretching, Exercise or Massage is too much if:

- You consistently feel more pain in the 2 hours that follow the session
- The area feels more painful during subsequent exercise or massage sessions
- If you get bruising or increased swelling

If the above occurs: Reduce number of sessions per day or week by 50%. Reduce the push force of the stretch/exercise. Reduce massage pressure or duration in each area by 50%. If the activity continues to aggravate after 2-3 days, stop and contact us without delay.

You are likely on track if:

You are feeling reduced pain/symptoms or improved flexibility/strength within a 3-14 day period after commencing your care routine. You may be ready to progress to the next level when you have achieved a 50% drop in pain (intensity or frequency) or 2-4 weeks have passed. Ask your Chiropractor to discuss a review and to upgrade to the next level.