

Taoist Neck Exercises - Bob Zuraw

Before starting these exercises, sit in seiza position (legs folded under), with shoulders, arms, and hands relaxed. If seiza is uncomfortable, sit on a chair or stand. Inhale deeply, and as you exhale, rotate your head around in a circle to a count of ten. Repeat, then reverse direction, counting to ten twice.

Exercise 1

Sit in seiza position and exhale. Inhale, and clasp your hands behind your neck. As you exhale, pull your head forward, bending your neck for a count of five. Do (his three times. Then inhale, cupping your chin in your hands. Exhale, and push your head back for a count of five. Repeat three times.

Exercise 2

Again, sit seiza. Inhale, placing your right hand on the back of your neck and your left hand on top of your head. Exhale, pulling your head to the left while keeping your shoulders as relaxed as possible, for a count of five. Inhale deeply each time as you straighten your head; exhale as you bend it. Do each side three times.

Exercise 3

Sitting seiza, exhale: Inhale, placing your left hand on the back of your neck, and your right hand on your chin. Exhale and twist your neck to the right, pushing gently with your right hand for a count of five. Repeat two more times, returning in your head to (he forward position as you inhale. Changing hand positions, repeat three times other side.

The neck is extremely important as it is the connecting point for the head and body affects our total state of health. When the neck tensed, the result is poor circulation (contracted blood vessels) and lack of oxygen to the brain decreases thinking ability. Also, neck tension affects the eyes, ears, nose, head, and throat. By removing congestion from the neck you also remove problems in these areas. These exercises will alleviate tension and stagnation from the neck and thus stimulate circulation of blood and energy. They also serve as corrective exercises for such common ailments as curvature of neck spinal area and habitual tilting of the head to one side.