

EXERCISE 1

Head Retraction in Sitting

Head retraction means pulling the head backwards. Sit on a chair, or stool, look straight ahead and allow yourself to relax completely. Your head will protrude a little as you do this (Fig. 4:2). Now you are ready to start the first and most important exercise.

Move your head slowly but steadily backwards until it is pulled back as far as you can manage (Fig. 4:3). It is important to keep your chin tucked down and in as you do this. In other words, you must remain looking straight ahead and should not tilt the head backwards as in looking up. When your head is pulled back as far as possible, you have assumed the retracted head posture (Fig. 4:3). Once you have maintained this position for a few seconds, you should relax and automatically your head and neck will protrude again (Fig. 4:2). Each time you repeat this movement cycle you must make sure that the backward movement of head and neck is performed to the *maximum possible degree*. The exercise can be made more effective by placing both hands on the chin and firmly pushing the head even further (Photo 4:4).

This exercise is used mainly in the treatment of neck pain. When used in the *treatment* of neck pain, the exercise should be repeated ten times per session and the sessions should be spread evenly six to eight times throughout the day. This means that you should repeat the sessions about every two hours. Should you experience severe pains on attempting this exercise, you must replace it with exercise 3. When used in the *prevention* of neck pain, the exercise should be repeated five or six times as often as required.

Fig. 4:2
The relaxed position allows
the head to protrude.

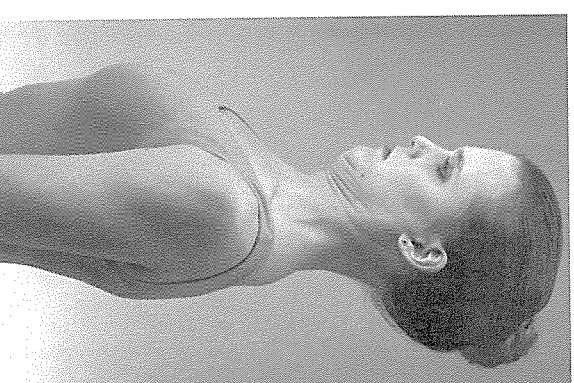
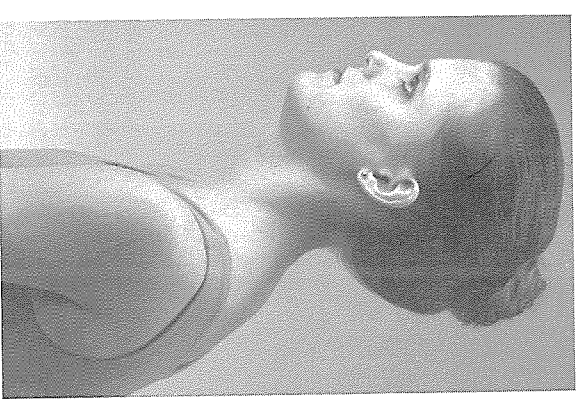


Fig. 4:3
The retracted position.

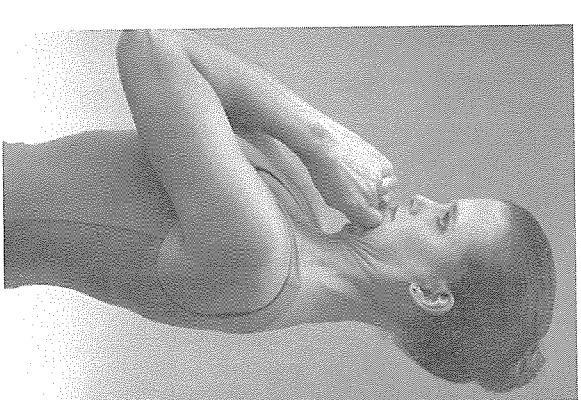


Fig. 4:4
Retracted with overpressure.