

# THE INDUSTRIAL ATHLETE DIGEST

Weekly Wellness & Safety Tips from Work Right NW



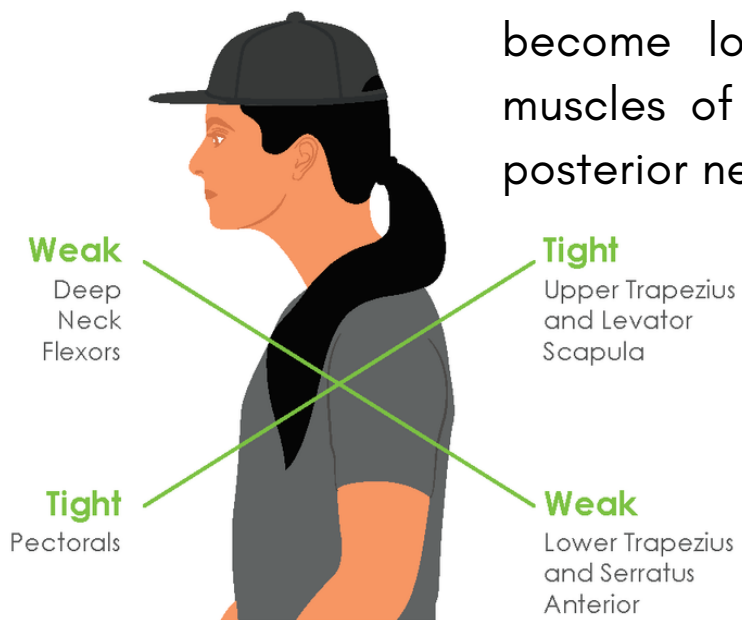
## AVOID THE PAIN IN THE NECK

VOLUME 10 | ISSUE 08 BY MELINDA TANGREDI, PT, DPT, OCS

There's a reason the phrase 'pain in the neck' is used to describe something that is bothersome and annoying. Anyone with literal neck pain knows they'd rather not deal with neck and shoulder discomfort. But for those with this actual pain while working, does it come with headaches or even some chest tightness? Perhaps with some tingling in one or both of the upper arms? We'll stick our necks out and say this is likely due to a condition known as Upper Crossed Syndrome or UCS.

### DON'T MAKE ME CROSS

Upper Crossed Syndrome can oftentimes occur in jobs that require spending extended periods of time looking down, looking up, or staring at a screen. When we hold our muscles in these positions for prolonged periods of time, they can shift out of balance and alignment with each other UCS can develop when the front of neck muscles and the posterior shoulder muscles become long and weak. The opposing muscles of the anterior shoulder and the posterior neck become shortened and tight



Upper Crossed Syndrome

Sometimes these muscle imbalances can cause postural disturbances, unnecessary discomfort, and even some muscle dysfunctions.

### THE BEST POSITION IS...

So, you've achieved true *pain in the neck* status. What next? How do we avoid UCS when the job requires you to look up all day long?

Here's the secret and an old kinesiology saying - "**The best position is the next position.**" As often as you can, take a tiny microbreak to change your position. A microbreak doesn't mean take a 10-minute break. Simply and periodically take 5 seconds to look the opposite direction of your work. Anytime you have a true break at work, allow your body 5 minutes of love.

Try a few simple chin tucks, a couple of shoulder blade squeezes, and then find your favorite doorway at work or home and do a 30 second doorway stretch. A little truly can go a LONG way!



#### Chin Tuck

Tuck your chin in towards your spine, elongating your spine and neck. Hold briefly.



#### Shoulder Blade Squeeze

Pinch the shoulder blades. Hold briefly.

READ MORE BY SCANNING THE QR CODE!

Work Right NW is changing the way that companies view workplace hazards. Our focus is on educating the workforce to prevent injury. We provide access to Injury Prevention Specialists in the workplace to address the early signs of discomfort. We are changing the industry one company at a time by helping one person at a time.

