ARMIN PHYSIO



PATIENT GUIDE

Levator Scapulae Pain

Pain in the neck and upper back? It could be your **levator scapulae.**

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What is the levator scapulae?

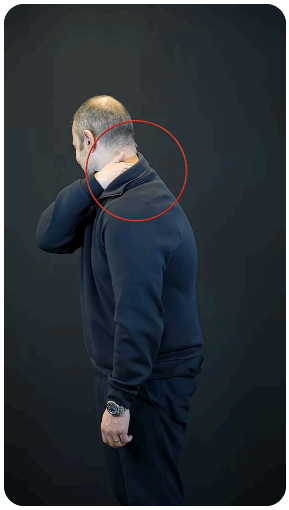
The levator scapulae is a muscle that runs from the side of your upper neck down to the top inner corner of your shoulder blade. It lifts your shoulder blade and helps you turn and bend your neck. When it's tense or overworked, pain can travel from your neck down to your shoulder. Strengthening and stretching it help reduce the tension and tone in the muscle.

QUICK CHECK

Does this sound like you?

- ☐ **Pain in the neck** going **down to your shoulder**
- ☐ Does it hurt when you **turn your neck**?
- ☐ Does it hurt when you **bend your neck**?
- ☐ Does it hurt when you **elevate your shoulders**?
- ☐ **Trigger points** near the top inner corner of the shoulder blade

If you ticked a few boxes, your levator scapulae could be the problem. Try the 2 exercises on the next pages.



Pain when you bend or turn your neck



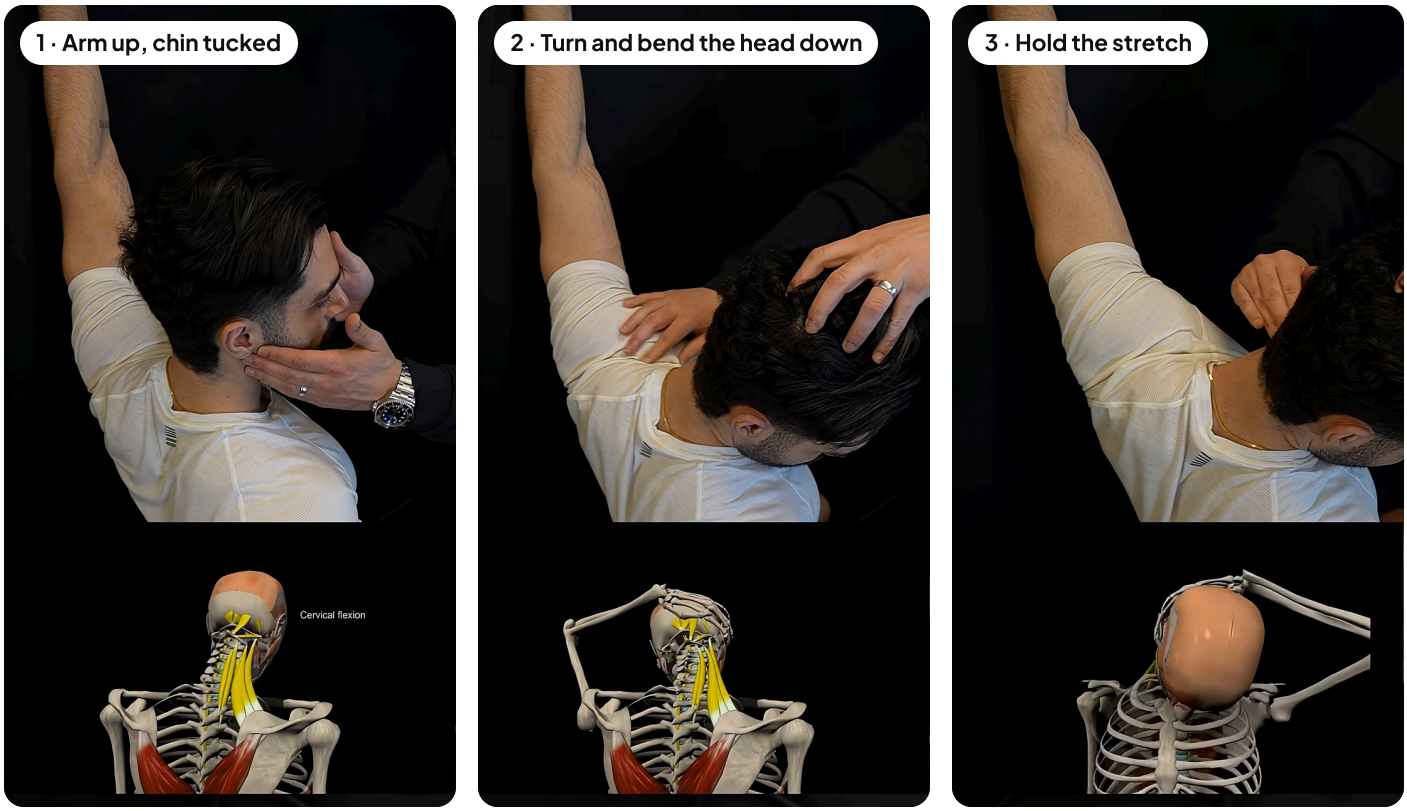
Trigger points right here

YOUR 2 EXERCISES

Try these exercises

1 Levator scapulae stretch

Stretches the muscle to ease tension in the neck and shoulder



1. Raise the arm on the **sore side** and rest it overhead or behind your head.
2. **Tuck your chin** down toward your chest.
3. **Turn your head away** and look down toward the opposite armpit (rotation with side-bend).
4. Use your other hand to **gently** add to the stretch. You should feel it from the side of the neck to the top of the shoulder blade.

3 sets, hold **45 seconds** each

From Armin's video description

Suggested steps: Armin demonstrates this one in the video without spoken instructions, so the wording here is ours. Follow what you see in the photos.

Stop if you get pain, numbness or tingling spreading down your arm, dizziness, or pain that keeps building.

2 Band shoulder shrug

Strengthens the levator scapulae through shoulder elevation



1. Stand tall. **Hold a band** with one hand at your waist and the other end in the hand on the **sore side**, arm straight by your side.
2. Keep the top hand still to **anchor the band**.
3. **Shrug the sore-side shoulder** up toward your ear against the band.
4. Lower slowly with control and repeat.

3 sets of 15 reps

From Armin's video description

Suggested steps: Armin demonstrates this one in the video without spoken instructions, so the wording here is ours. Follow what you see in the photos.

Stop if you get pain, numbness or tingling spreading down your arm, dizziness, or pain that keeps building.

DAILY ROUTINE · ABOUT 10 MINUTES

Put it together

01
Strengthen
Band shoulder shrug, 3 × 15

02
Stretch
Levator scapulae stretch, 3 × 45 s

Sets, reps and hold times are from Armin's video description; doing it once a day is a suggestion. The video shows these exercises without spoken steps, so the step wording is suggested.

Stop the exercise if you notice

- Pain, numbness or tingling spreading down your arm
- Dizziness, or pain that keeps building as you go
- Pain that lingers or is worse the next day

If an exercise keeps causing these, stop it and get assessed.

SAFETY FIRST

Get checked right away if you have

- Neck pain after a **car accident, fall or hit to the head**, especially with **severe pain** or not being able to move your neck
- A **sudden, severe or unusual headache** ("the worst headache of your life")
- **Dizziness, double vision, trouble speaking or swallowing**, drooping of the face, or fainting
- **Numbness, tingling or weakness** in your arms or hands that is **getting worse**, or in **both arms**
- **Clumsy hands, trouble walking or poor balance**, or new **bladder or bowel** changes
- A **stiff neck with a fever**, constant pain at night, or **unexplained weight loss**

Call 911 for a sudden severe headache, trouble speaking, face drooping or weakness on one side. For the others, see a doctor right away or go to the nearest emergency department. If your neck isn't improving after a few weeks, **book an assessment**.

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NEED MORE HELP?

Book an assessment with Armin

In clinic or virtually. See current options and times at the link.

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Disclaimer: This handout is for education only. It is not a diagnosis or medical advice and does not replace an assessment by a qualified health professional. If you're unsure whether these exercises are right for you, check with your physiotherapist or doctor first.

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