

# Upper back pain – how you can stretch and move to get relief at home

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/n0oY5ftJ07M>

My name is Dr. Jay Breitlow with New Leaf Chiropractic and Family Wellness, and joining me today is my beautiful wife, Dr. Christina. – Hello. – So we're gonna cover eight different stretches that you can do for your upper back. So the first one, and if I could have my wife turn around here, this one's gonna work on your rhomboid. So if the pain is in this area, this particular exercise could help out. Commonly it's called the eagle exercise, and what we're attempting to do is get that shoulder blade pulled out of the way, so you can just pull that across.

You wanna make sure that you're pulling the energy of your shoulder all the way across. And you want to work on both sides, again, sometimes it's a little bit easier, I don't have the best flexibility ever, but you can see I'm pulling that across my body this way. So number one, the eagle, for the rhomboid stretch. Number two is just the head tilt, right here. So on my wife, the trapezius muscle is right here.

So with the head tilt sideways, you just pull it over. Ideally, you don't want someone to do this for you. You want to do it actively to yourself. Very good. Similar to that head tilt, we're gonna engage what's called the levator scap. The difference with this is, when Christina went straight to the side, now look in your left, or this case, look in your right pocket. By looking down like you're looking in your pocket for a nickel, it's gonna engage the levator scap muscle, which

goes from your cervical spine into the upper part of the back.

Actually, it goes right into the top part of the scapulae shoulder blade. So it's directly across, head tilt for the trap is two, look down for a nickel, levator scap, that's number three. Latissimus dorsi. So this is just lateral bends. So go ahead and turn around, my wife had a work out, see her great, big, latissimus dorsi muscle, it's a really big muscle, it goes from T1 all the way out lateral, back inserts at T12, it comes back around, and for this we're just, arms over your head, and you're just bending. So Christina is engaging her left, and I'm engaging my right. Then you can go backwards. Hey, nice work, Christina. (laughs) Okay, so your Latissimus Dorsi and your lateral bend is number three.

I'm going to push my wife out of the way for this one. – Do not push. – I'm going to guide her gently out of the frame. This is the Volkswagen stretch. V and W. V, W. You can also refer to another video that we have, up against the wall on this, and can I invite you back into the frame of the video? And what we're attempting to do is get these rhomboids brought back. So give me a big V, Christina, really big, straight up, and then the W, and you want to make sure you're coming straight back down, and engaging those rhomboids. The Volkswagen stretch. It also, so you engage the lower part of the traps on this one. The next one, just grabbing a lacrosse ball, I thought we had a lacrosse ball here, – It's– – [Jay] Right here.

Got it. Yeah, just use a lacrosse ball if it's in your office. You can do this on the floor. Against the wall. What we are attempting to do with the lacrosse ball, is you're just working it into your back. This one can be a bit of a burner. Lacrosse balls you can get on Amazon, or if you're playing good sports in town. It's a pretty heavy ball, not a racket ball, but a lacrosse ball. It's really going to dig into those

back muscles. The other one that goes with this, lacrosse ball six, foam roller seven. May I use your back? And usually you do this on the floor. Also, on our website, Longmont, newleaf-chiropractic.com, or chiropracticlongmont.com, click on stretches, there's a whole video on how to foam roll. This one overlaps because the foam rolling is going to happen here. Usually you'll do those on the floor.

Actually, here, do you wanna foam roll, or shall I? – I can do it. – Good? Okay. So, Christina, while she's doing the foam rolling, this is number seven on the floor. And usually we're a big fan of crossing our arms, and go all the way back into the frame of view, keep going back that way, that way, that way, that way, there you go, beautiful. All right, thank you, Christina. Could you show us Child's Pose? So the last one is more of just a relaxation, but this is classic yoga, just Child's Pose on the floor.

And in this particular one, we're just stretching out the latissimus dorsi, the traps, not so much levator scap, but definitely the latissimus dorsi there. Eight stretches that you can do for your own back. The eagle, stretch your rhomboid, head tilt, trap, head tilt, levator scap, don't forget about the latissimus dorsi with the lateral bend, that's four, Volkswagen stretch, lacrosse ball, foam roller, and then the last one, Child's Pose. Hope you enjoyed this video. These videos, these strengthening, stretching videos may or may not work for you. Please consult your doctor first. I feel like that kind of goes without saying, but I want to remind everybody officially that you do need to make sure these work for you, because they might not.

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