



## Thoracic Spine Tips

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Did you know that your parents were right all those years? If yours were like mine, you probably heard, "Sit up straight. You're slouching. If you sit like that long enough, you'll get stuck like that." For me, pretty much every meal from the 4th grade on. Well the truth is that a consistently slouched posture will cause you to eventually develop thoracic kyphosis, or a forward rounding of your shoulder girdle and forward curvature of your thoracic spine. In other words, you will get stuck like that. I hate it when they are right!



Unfortunately, this prolonged posture can lead to some very debilitating ramifications including shoulder impingement, rotator cuff tears, chronic trigger points, pain in the upper back and neck, overstretching and weakness of the upper back muscles, and diminished respiratory function, to name a few. The good news is thoracic kyphosis and all of these secondary dysfunctions can be avoided with a few very simple exercises designed to counteract your poor daily posture.

### **Foam roller T-spine extensions:**

Place a foam roller (available at most gyms and sporting goods stores) lengthwise across your upper back just below the level of your arm pits. Place your hands behind your head and arch back toward the floor with your arms and head. Hold 5 seconds and repeat 5 times. Move the roller down your upper back a couple of inches and repeat.



Foam Roller T-spine Extensions

### **Foam roller soft tissue massage - lats and rhomboids:**

**Lats** - Laying on your side with arm overhead, roll your body up and down over the foam roller. Bring your box of Kleenex because these hurt so good! Repeat 10 times.



Lats

**Rhomboids** - Laying in a ¼ turned position, roll your body up and down over the roller targeting the tissue between your shoulder blade and your spine. Repeat 10 times.



Rhomboids

**90/90 wall slides:**

Stand with your feet about 12-16 inches from the wall and position your back, rear, and shoulders against the wall. Start with your arms pressed against the wall with the elbows as low as you can. Slowly slide your arms up and down the wall with the forearms maintaining contact throughout. Repeat for 10 reps.



90 / 90 Wall Slides

**Reach - Roll - Lift:**

Lying on your stomach with one arm overhead and your palm facing down on the ground, reach as far up as you can with the arm. Then, roll your hand so your thumb is facing the ceiling and finish by lifting the arm off the floor as high as you can. Lower and repeat 10 reps with each arm.



These exercises are easy to incorporate in you warm-ups or a good finisher at the end of a workout. Good luck!