

Upper Crossed Syndrome Exercises: Your Guide to a Corrective Routine

Exercise	Sets	Repetitions / Time
Barbell Row	3 – 4	8 – 12 Reps
Face Pull	3 – 4	8 – 12 Reps
Isometric Neck Flexion	3 – 4	15 – 90 Seconds
Pec Stretch	1 – 2	30 – 60 Seconds
Neck Stretch	1 – 2	30 – 60 Seconds

Doing this routine **two to three times a week** will bring significant improvement. It is important that you are **consistent**. Give your muscles time to recover between training days by resting or only training other muscle groups.

It is essential to keep challenging your body to improve little by little over time. For the strength exercises, you need to **increase reps or time and weight over time**.

This routine is specifically designed to focus on the main problem areas of Upper Crossed Syndrome (UCS). It will attack UCS but it is not a balanced work out.

However, a lot of these issues are linked to other body parts. For example, weak hamstrings and glutes paired with tight hip flexors cause a compromised hip position.

This makes it harder to keep your upper body in a good position and contributes to slouching.

For the **most effective approach to correcting UCS**, consider buying our **holistic program that addresses postural issues everywhere in your body**.

Our promise is: [Improve your posture in 90 days or get your money back!](#)

<https://posture-labs.com/programs/improve-your-posture-in-90-days/>



Barbell Row

To target the weakness in your lower traps and rhomboids, incorporate the **Barbell Row** into your routine.



Instructions:

- Hold a loaded barbell in front of you with your hands a little wider than shoulder-width.
- Bend your knees slightly and lean forward until you feel a slight stretch in your hamstrings or your upper body is parallel to the ground while maintaining a neutral spine (don't round or arch your back).
- With your legs maintaining a bent position, pull the weight towards you until you make contact with your belly (in the area between your belly button and below your chest, depending on your angle towards the ground).
- Perform the movement in a controlled way without gaining momentum by using your legs or shrugging your shoulders.
- When you make contact with your belly, make sure to pull your shoulder blades together and down.
- Hold a second at the top.
- Descent the bar slowly and controlled until your arms are fully straightened.

Home edition: If you have no access to a barbell, **single arm dumbbell rows** offer a good alternative. You can also use other heavy objects for single arm rows. Generally, any type of row is a good exercise to strengthen the lower trapezius and rhomboid muscles. In case you have no exercise equipment at all, **inverted rows** from a stable object like a desk are your best substitute. However, they are harder to scale as gradual weight improvements are challenging.

Face Pull

To further improve strength in your upper back and the back of your shoulders, the **Face Pull** is an essential exercise.



Instructions:

- Use a resistance band or cable machine with a rope attachment that you can grip on each side (a longer one is preferred) and set it up in front of you at shoulder height.
- Using both hands, grip each side of the band or rope so that your thumbs are pointing toward you.
- Make sure to have a stable stance with your feet at shoulder-width and your knees slightly bent.
- Pull the band or rope towards and behind your face (at eye or nose level).
- Go behind your face by going around it to the sides of your face.
- At the end of the movement, your hands should be above your elbows.
- Go back as far as possible (the length of the rope attachment might be the limiting factor on the cable machine as you make contact with your face).
- Briefly hold for 1 or 2 seconds.
- Go back to the starting position in a controlled way.

Home edition: A cable machine is not a must-have to do face pulls. You can also do them using a **resistance band**. Make sure to attach the resistance bands to a stable object.

Isometric Neck Flexion

To strengthen your deep neck flexors, practice **Isometric Neck Flexion**. For alternative exercises to strengthen the front of your neck, check out <https://posture-labs.com/isometric-neck-exercises/>.

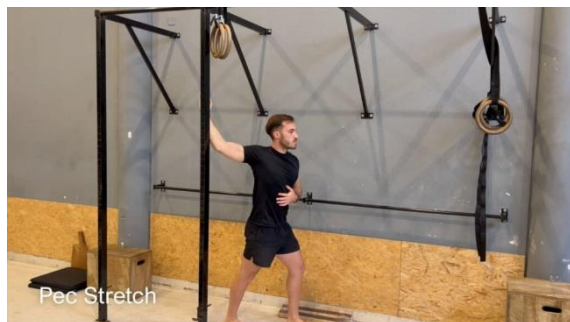


Instructions:

- Lie down on your back.
- Slightly tuck your chin.
- Elevate your head just enough to keep it off the ground and hold.
- The goal is not to lift your head up very high but to hold it up just far enough, so it is not in contact with the floor.
- Hold the position.
- You can make the exercise more challenging by placing a small weight on your forehead. Use your hands to hold it in place.

Pec Stretch

Tight pectoralis muscles can exacerbate UCS. **Stretching your chest** will help release tension.



Instructions:

- Stand close to a doorway, squat rack, or wall.
- Place the hand you want to stretch on the object, with your arm up to your side and the elbow bent.
- Brace your core and stabilize your shoulder.

- Slowly push your body forward, keeping your arm pressed against the object.
- Make sure to avoid arching your back or using too much force to push yourself forward.
- You should feel a slight stretch in your chest without putting a lot of stress on your shoulder joint.
- You can change the height of your hand to target different parts of your chest.

Neck Stretch

Lastly, alleviate tension in your upper trapezius and levator scapulae with a simple **Neck Stretch**.



Instructions:

- Stand straight with a neutral spine, don't roll your shoulders forward and try to relax the muscles in your neck.
- Tilt your head as if you wanted to bring your ear to your shoulder.
- You can assist the stretch by gently pulling with your hand (don't use too much force).
- Try to bring the opposite shoulder towards the ground.
- Hold the stretch safely (you should not feel pain or a tingling sensation).
- To alternate the stretch, you can tilt your head slightly from that position as if you were trying to look at your shoulder.