

**The 12 Days of Christmas  
The 12 Pains of Christmas  
The 12 Stretches of Christmas**

During the last two years that I have been writing the "Muscles" column, many people have asked me to talk about their specific pain problem. So for the Holiday Season I have listed twelve different problems that I commonly treat at the Center for Pain Treatment. My treatment has two important parts. The first is pressing trigger points (injured spots in the muscle) until a release occurs. The second part takes this released muscle into a specific therapeutic stretch to bring it back to a more normal range of motion, giving it greater strength and an elimination of the pain.

Both parts together bring a very immediate relief. The second part, the stretch by itself still works, but takes much longer than both together.

The Christmas list below has 12 different sets of stretches for 12 different pain or weakness problems. Find your pain problem and perform your stretch for 3 repetitions, holding each for 3 seconds. Do 5 sets a day and start to feel better for Christmas!

**ON THE 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS:**

**ONE HURTING, STIFF NECK**

Usually you wake up with it.



- Grasp arm at wrist, pull arm down and across the back
- Lean head to opposite shoulder
- Rotate head in varying angles as you continue its lean to shoulder

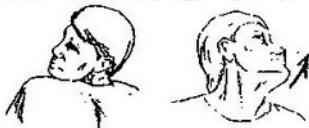
**TWO TEMPLE HEADACHES**



- Grasp arm at wrist, pull arm down and across the back
- Lean head to opposite shoulder
- Rotate head in varying angles as you continue its lean to shoulder

**THREE DIZZY SPELLS**

Can also cause a headache over the eyes.



- Turn head to left
- Tilt head backward

**FOUR GUTTER BALLS**

Yes, do these stretches and your bowling game will improve

- Place one foot/leg forward
- Feet should point straight ahead
- Arch back slightly as you shift the hips forward
- Stretch is felt in groin of leg that is extended back



**FIVE PUZZLING EYE PROBLEMS**

Can include blurred vision, tearing, double vision, red eye, droopy eye lid and a headache around the eye.

- Turn head to left
- Lower chin tilting face downward



**SIX TUMMY INCHES BULGING**

I'm not kidding - do this exercise and the size of your abdomen can go down - NO SITUPS!

- pushing the torso up (away) with the arms from the supine to the seated position. This avoids loading the flexor muscles of the trunk and hips.
- beginning of the slow sitback. lumbar spine flexed.
- ending of full relaxation with abdominal (diaphragmatic) breathing. These cycles of this slow sitback exercise should be performed daily to provide full benefit.
- tilting the back down onto the table, maintaining spinal flexion so that each spinal segment rests the table in succession.
- completion of slow sitback.

**SEVEN LOWER BACK PLACES IN SPASM**



- Head down
- Arch back upward



- Shift to sitting on heel position



- Return to starting position
- Shift back so sitting on right heel
- Bring arms toward left
- Repeat shifting to left heel - arms to right

**EIGHT RIBS STICKING**

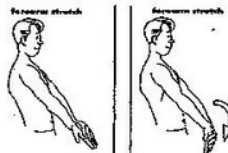
You can't seem to take a deep breath.

- Body leans toward wall with outside of elbow
- Wall pushes elbow behind the back



**NINE FINGERS NUMBING**

Also a pain in your wrist



**TEN TOES CRAMPING**

Also helps calf cramps and plantar fasciitis

- Corrective Stretch
- Place foot on edge of support
- Keep knee straight
- Lower heel towards floor



**ELEVEN LOUSY GOLF BALL STROKES**

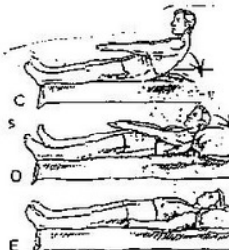
This stretch will help to improve your driving and chipping.



**TWELVE TEETH ACHING**

Also helps TMJ

- Raise eyebrows
- Open jaw as wide as possible
- Move jaw to right and left



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