

# Phase 1

## GOOD FOR:

- Alleviating upper neck and headache pain
- Relieving muscle tension
- Warm-up for phase 2 and 3 exercises

## GUIDELINES:

- Perform every day
- Tools: small massage ball, yoga block

Add phase 2 when you have no pain at rest and no more than mild pain (3/10) with the exercises

# Phase 1

## SOFT TISSUE MOBILIZATIONS:

- Spend 1–2 minutes on each area
- Perform in any order on both sides
- Stop on tender points for 10–20 seconds

## suboccipital mobilization

Place a small massage ball on a yoga block, positioning the ball at the base of your skull, just to the side of your cervical spine. Move slowly around this region to target the suboccipital muscles. You can rotate your head to the side or twist and adjust the ball with your opposite hand. If the pressure is too intense or you don't have the tools, do one of the manual variations.



## **suboccipital mobilization (manual variation 1)**

To do the manual variation using both hands, cup your hands around your skull just above your ears and press your thumbs into your suboccipital muscles around the base of your skull. Gently massage the area. Apply pressure and move your chin to your chest.





## **suboccipital mobilization (manual variation 2)**

You can also do the manual variation using one hand. While pressing your thumb into your suboccipital muscles, rotate your head to the side by moving your chin toward your opposite shoulder.



## upper trapezius mobilization

Position a small massage ball between a doorframe or rack and your upper trapezius muscle. Work your way across the entire muscle from your shoulder to the base of your neck. Drive into the ball to increase the pressure. Move your arm behind your back or in front of your body and your head down and to the side to further mobilize the muscle.



## levator scapulae mobilization

Position the ball at the corner of your shoulder blade. Elevate your hips to increase the pressure. Add arm movements to further mobilize the muscle.

