

# Alexander technique versus targeted exercise for neck pain

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		<input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
<b>Registration date</b> 16/11/2020	<b>Overall study status</b> Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
<b>Last Edited</b> 14/03/2022	<b>Condition category</b> Musculoskeletal Diseases	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data

## Plain English summary of protocol

### Background and study aims

The Alexander technique addresses the distribution and adaptivity of postural tone during everyday activity. This is thought to ameliorate pains and problems brought about by faulty habits of posture and movement. The goal of this study is to determine if group Alexander technique classes are as effective as a targeted exercise program for reducing chronic neck pain.

### Who can participate?

Any adults over the age of 18 who score above 16% on a neck pain questionnaire, have had neck pain for over 3-months, are not receiving specialized care, and can attend the classes are welcome to participate.

### What does the study involve?

The study involves an initial baseline screening, either 10 Alexander Technique classes or exercises class, a screening immediately following the classes, and a final screening 6 weeks after the classes end. Each screening will take 1-hour and involves 2 questionnaires, an assessment to record neck muscle activity, and playing a video-game for 5 minutes.

### What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

The possible benefits of the study are decreased neck pain and progressing the knowledge of interventions that may help with neck pain. The possible risks are increased neck pain or injury.

### Where is the study run from?

North Idaho Athletic Club (USA) and the University of Idaho (USA)

### When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

From September 2017 to May 2018

### Who is funding the study?

University of Idaho (USA)

Who is the main contact?

Dr Rajal Cohen  
rcohen@uidaho.edu

## Contact information

### Type(s)

Scientific

### Contact name

Dr Rajal Cohen

### ORCID ID

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### Contact details

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## Additional identifiers

### Clinical Trials Information System (CTIS)

Nil known

### ClinicalTrials.gov (NCT)

Nil known

### Protocol serial number

17-164

## Study information

### Scientific Title

Alexander technique versus targeted exercise for neck pain

### Study objectives

The Alexander Technique group, relative to the exercise group, will show reduced activity of the superficial neck flexors and reduced neck pain after the intervention.

### Ethics approval required

Old ethics approval format

### Ethics approval(s)

Approved 08/09/2017, University of Idaho Institutional Review Board (875 Perimeter Drive, Moscow, Idaho, 83844, USA; +1 208-885-6340; irb@uidaho.edu), ref: 010629

## **Study design**

Two-group quasi-randomized pretest-posttest design

## **Primary study design**

Interventional

## **Study type(s)**

Treatment

## **Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied**

Neck pain

## **Interventions**

Participants will be assigned quasi-randomly to groups, based in part on their availability to attend either Monday-Wednesday or Tuesday-Thursday evening class sessions. One group will receive ten Alexander technique classes and the other group will ten receive exercise classes, over 5 weeks.

The AT classes will include information on basic biomechanical and ergonomic principles (including the anatomy of the neck, spine, and major joints of the upper and lower limbs) and benefits of widening awareness to include both the self and the environment during activity. In addition, participants will be guided in self-observation during common daily activities such as standing, sitting, computer work, personal care tasks, and household chores.

The exercise intervention exercises will be aimed at retraining the use of the deep cervical flexors, strengthening postural muscles, and increasing range of motion. The therapeutic retraining component will be based on an adaptation of the protocol described by Jull et al. Participants will place the backs of their necks on a rolled towel and gently rotated their heads as if nodding 'yes', with a goal of activating the deep cervical flexors rather than surface neck flexors. Postural strengthening exercises will include the use of dumbbells and resistance bands (Theraband®, Akron, OH) to target the trapezius and upper-back muscles. The trapezius and anterior neck muscles will be stretched to increase mobility. Each exercise class will include 10 minutes of light stretching, followed by 45 minutes of retraining and strength exercises aimed at promoting a more upright posture.

Follow-up measurements will be taken immediately after the interventions end, and 6 weeks after the interventions end.

## **Intervention Type**

Other

## **Primary outcome(s)**

Neck disability measured using the Northwick park questionnaire at baseline, 5, and 11 weeks

## **Key secondary outcome(s)**

1. Superficial muscle activity will be measured using the CCFT at baseline, 5, and 11 weeks
2. Self-efficacy will be measured using the Pain Self Efficacy questionnaire at baseline, 5, and 11 weeks

3. Intervention assessment will be measured using a questionnaire assessing impressions of the interventions will be administered after completion of the course

4. Video-game posture will be measured using photos at baseline, 5, and 11 weeks

**Completion date**

01/05/2018

## **Eligibility**

**Key inclusion criteria**

1. Score 16% or higher on the Neck Disability Index
2. Had at least 3 months of neck pain
3. Not currently receiving specialized care
4. Available for the scheduled class times

**Participant type(s)**

Healthy volunteer

**Healthy volunteers allowed**

No

**Age group**

Adult

**Sex**

All

**Total final enrolment**

16

**Key exclusion criteria**

Does not meet inclusion criteria

**Date of first enrolment**

01/01/2018

**Date of final enrolment**

01/02/2018

## **Locations**

**Countries of recruitment**

United States of America

**Study participating centre**

**North Idaho Athletic Club**

408 S Main St

Moscow

United States of America  
83843

**Study participating centre**  
**University of Idaho**  
875 Perimeter Dr  
Moscow  
United States of America  
83844

## Sponsor information

**Organisation**  
University of Idaho

**ROR**  
<https://ror.org/03hbp5t65>

## Funder(s)

**Funder type**  
University/education

**Funder Name**  
University of Idaho

**Alternative Name(s)**  
UI Idaho, U of I, VANDALS, The University of Idaho, UI

**Funding Body Type**  
Government organisation

**Funding Body Subtype**  
Universities (academic only)

**Location**  
United States of America

## Results and Publications

## Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The datasets generated during and/or analyzed during the current study are/will be available upon request from Rajal Cohen (rcohen@uidaho.edu) and will be shared by email. Individual requesting data may access the data indefinitely. Consent from participants was obtained and all the data has been de-identified.

## IPD sharing plan summary

Available on request

## Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
<a href="#">Results article</a>		19/05/2021	14/03/2022	Yes	No