

Self-Care Tips for Musicians

Habits of a Healthy Musician

- Listen to the body and respect
- Warm up and cool down
- Minimize tension
- Take quality breaks
- Recognize warning signs
- Keep overall fitness and endurance
- Regulate hand intensive tasks
- Manage workload and time
- Aware of posture and stress in the body
- Take care of mental stress and anxiety



IMPORTANT

**Keep your
equipment
in shape!**

Before, During, After Playing

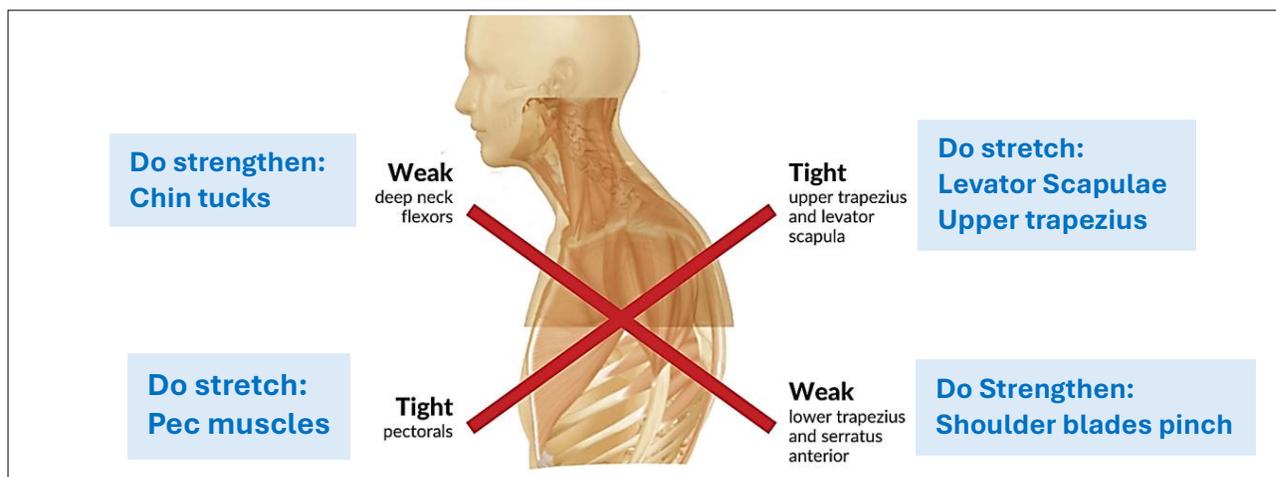
- Warm up to increase circulation. Perform big arm movement: 15-20 reps
- Strengthening: 10 reps, 2-3 sets, 2x/week
- Aerobic exercises: 15-20 min, 3-5x/week, something you like.
- Breaks: 5 min every 30 min practice, 15 min every 60 min practice
 - Active: resting from instrument, but staying engaged with music
 - Diverting: Leave the room and take mind off
 - Restorative: Resting and doing restorative movements
- Stretches:
 - Focus on neck, back, shoulders, forearms, lateral trunk
 - Reverse movements you most often do.
 - No bouncing and ease into stretch.
 - No pain just tension.
 - Remember to breath.

Cold vs Heat Application

Cold	Heat
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Acute, severe pain▪ To decrease pain and swelling.▪ Apply immediately after injury and during the acute phase.▪ Apply for 15-30 min. Repeat every 1-2 hours.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Chronic, mild pain▪ Use when not swollen▪ To increase range of motion▪ To decrease joint stiffness▪ Apply for 20 min.

What Can I Do when I hurt?

- Understand:
 - Detailed pain pattern: Joint, nerve, tendon, muscle?
 - Performance history (Practice schedule, quality of instrument)
 - Note any modifications (repertoire, instrument, technique)
 - Playing position and biomechanics analysis
 - Psychosocial (anxiety, stress) factors
- Ice or heat
- Compression gloves or sleeves for comfort
- TENS
- Topical cream: Biofreeze, Icy Hot, Tiger balm, Capsaicin, Arnica, Aspercreme, etc.
- Postural awareness (sitting, standing, playing)
- Body awareness practice: aware and minimize feelings of tension
- Develop skills for reducing stress and practicing rest
- Prevent awkward/painful positioning with braces
- General body conditioning
- Strengthening
- Stretching
- Smart practicing
- Practice joint protection and energy conservation
- Self-massage
- Trigger point release
 - Find a tender spot.
 - Hold the pressure for 30–90 seconds until discomfort decreases.
 - Stretch the muscle gently after releasing it.



**Most of all, be proactive instead of reactive in taking care of your body.
If you hurt, make modifications, and seek for professional help before waiting too long.**

