

Upper Body: Range of Motion Exercises for the Arms - Passive (PROM)

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These exercises can help to improve the range of movement and decrease stiffness/pain at the joints of the arm. The shoulder blade/scapula must be stretched first before any shoulder movement

- All exercises may be done sitting or lying down.
- The helper should perform each motion as instructed until resistance is felt or as directed.
- The client should feel a stretch within their individual pain tolerance.
- Hold each position for **at least 30 seconds** for optimal stretch.
- Repeat each exercise for _____ repetitions.
- Perform each exercise _____ times daily.

Occupational Therapist: _____

Contact Information: _____

Scapular Exercises

Up/Down (elevation/depression) – seated or sidelying

- **Hand/Start positions #1:** Place one hand on the back, so that fingers line up with the borders of the shoulder blade. Use the other hand to lightly support the front of the shoulder.
- **End position #1:** Pull the shoulder blade down towards the waist, using thumb on upper border. (The shoulder blade should stay flat against the rib cage.)
- **Start position #2:** Place one hand on the back, so the bottom edge of the shoulder blade is positioned between your thumb and first finger.
- **End position #2:** Push the shoulder blade up towards the ear

#1:



#2:

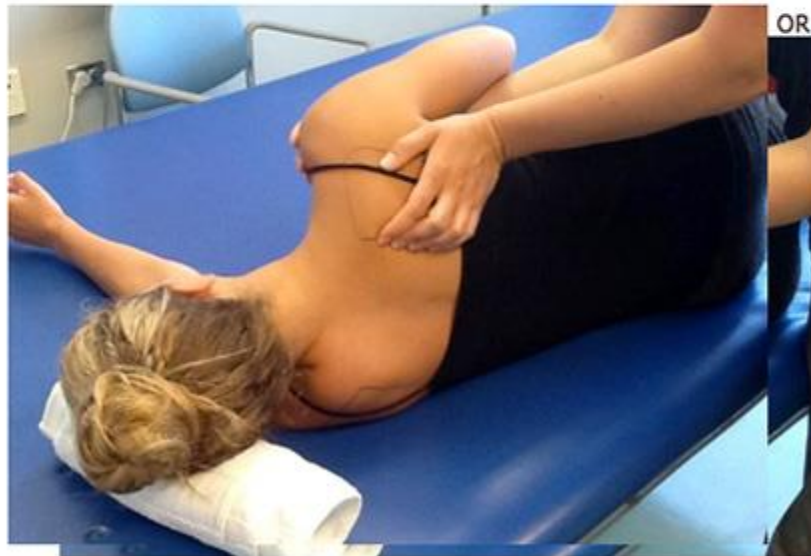


Forward/Back (protraction/retraction) – seated or sidelying

- **Hand position:** Place one hand on the front of the shoulder for stability and the other hand on the person's shoulder blade (heel of hand near the person's armpit and finger tips at the middle edge of the shoulder blade).
- **Start position:** Gently pull at the middle edge of the shoulder blade to move the it away from the spine.
- **End position:** Using the heel of the hand, gently press the shoulder blade back towards the spine.



OR



OR

Shoulder Exercises

Stop Sign (internal and external rotation)

- **Hand positions:** Place one hand under the wrist and one under the elbow.
- **Start position:** Position the arm with the shoulder and elbow bent at 90 degree with the hand facing up, in the “stop” position.
- **End position:** Move the palm downward. Keep the elbow in line with the shoulder



If person is unable to reach their arm to the pictured shoulder position (with the arm at shoulder height), use this alternate position for external rotation.



Toy Soldier (flexion)

- **Hand positions:** Place one hand under the forearm/wrist and one hand at the shoulder for stability.
- **Start position:** Position the arm at the side, with elbow straight and thumb facing up.
- **End position:** Raise the arm to shoulder height.



Bowling (shoulder extension)

- **Hand positions:** Place one hand on the front of the shoulder and one on the front of the upper arm.
- **Start position:** Place the arm at the person's side.
- **End position:** Gently press or pull the arm back, stabilizing the shoulder as you stretch.



Snow Angel (abduction)

- **Hand positions:** Place one hand under the wrist and one under the elbow.
- **Start position:** Position arm at the side with elbow straight and thumb facing up.
- **End position:** Gently raise the person's arm out to the side, stabilizing the shoulder as you stretch.



Breast Stroke (horizontal adduction and abduction)

- **Hand positions:** Place one hand under the wrist/forearm and one at the back of the shoulder/shoulder blade.
- **Start position:** Position arm at shoulder level, with elbow straight.
- **End position #1:** Move arm away from chest to the side.
- **End position #2:** Move arm across chest to opposite shoulder – make sure you take a step as you move the person's arm to avoid bending.



Elbow Exercise

Elbow Bend (flexion/extension)

- Hand positions: Place one hand at the shoulder and one hand at the person's wrist/forearm.
- Start position: Position arm at side with elbow bent.
- End position: Slowly straighten the elbow.



Forearm Exercise

Handshake (supination/pronation)

- **Hand positions:** Grasp the person's hand as if you are to shake their hand and the other hand at the forearm or elbow for support and stability.
- **Start position:** Position arm so that the elbow is near the side of the person's body.
- **End position #1:** Turn forearm so that the palm faces up.
- **End position #2:** Turn forearm so that the palm faces down.



Wrist Exercise

Wrist Wave (wrist flexion/extension)

- **Hand positions:** Place one hand in the person's palm and one hand on the forearm.
- **Start position:** Slowly move the wrist back as far as you can, by pressing on the palm (not the fingers).
- **End position:** Slowly bend the wrist forward.

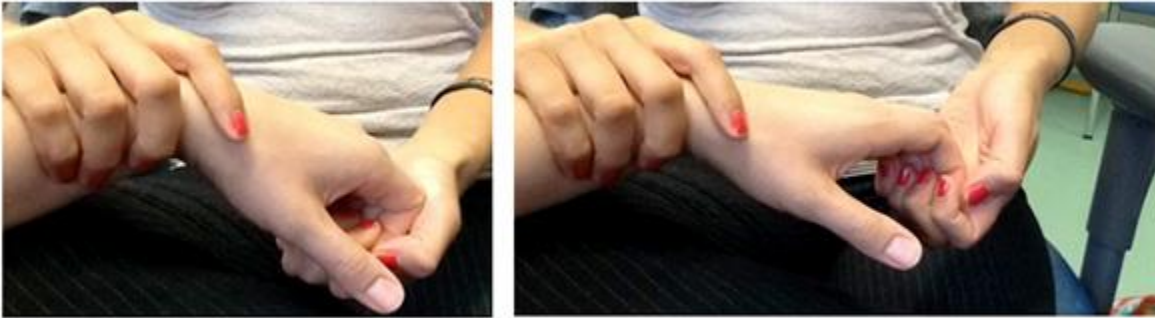


****People with spinal cord injuries should be careful not to stretch the fingers open with wrist extension. Follow the guidelines for the tenodesis stretch****

Finger Exercises

Finger opening (composite finger extension with wrist positioned at neutral)

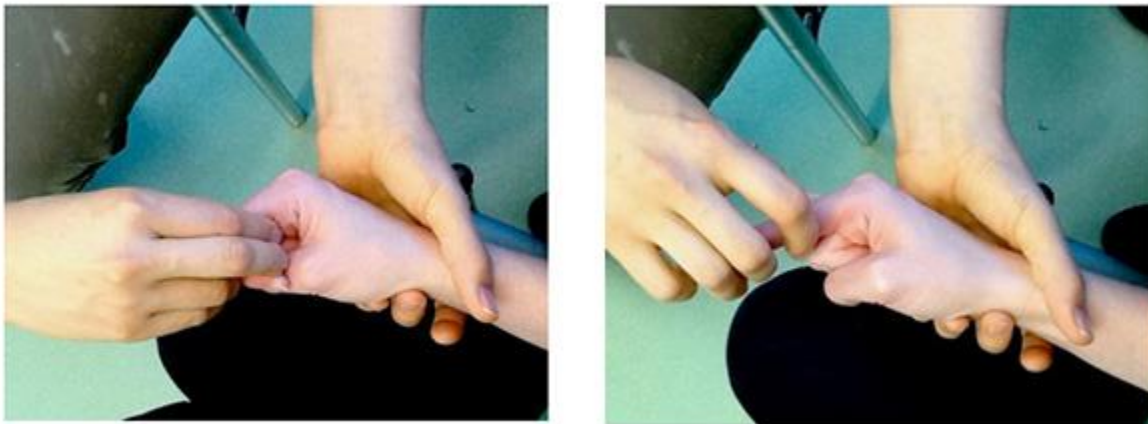
- **Hand/Start positions:** Place one hand at the wrist and the other hand holding the fingers, supporting at the knuckles.
- **End position:** Slowly stretch the fingers straight, opening the hand as much as possible.



People with spinal cord injuries should be careful not to stretch the fingers open with wrist extension. Follow the guidelines for the tenodesis stretch*

Individual finger stretch (isolated digit flexion/extension)

- **Hand positions:** Place one hand at the person's wrist. With the other hand, take hold of the person's finger with your index and middle fingers and thumb, holding the finger near the base of the knuckle.
- **Start position:** Slowly bend the finger into a fist position, making sure each of the joints bend as much as possible.
- **End position:** Slowly straighten the finger as much as possible, providing equal pressure along the whole finger.



Thumb Exercises

Web Stretch (abduction)

- **Hand positions:** Place one hand under palm and hold thumb near its base.
- **Start position:** Position thumb next to the index finger.
- **End position:** Move thumb away from the index finger, keeping it in line with the index finger.



Thumb Bend (flexion)

- **Hand positions:** Place one hand under palm and hold thumb near its base. (same as for Web Stretch).
- **Start position:** Position thumb underneath index finger with the palm facing down
- **End position:** Bend thumb across palm towards the little finger. Be careful not to stretch thumb out to the side of the index finger.



Pinkie Touch (thumb opposition)

- **Hand positions:** Place one hand under palm and hold thumb near its base. (same as for Web Stretch).
- **Start position:** Position thumb underneath index finger with the palm facing down
- **End position:** Move thumb downward under index finger (as for Web Stretch), then around to touch the pinkie.
Persons with spinal cord injuries should be careful not to stretch thumb out to the side of index finger.



Neck Exercises

Head turn (Lateral cervical rotation)

- **Hand positions:** Place one hand at the base of the person's head and the other hand on the top of their head, with your fingers resting on their forehead.
- **Start position:** Position the person's head so they look forward.
- **End position #1:** Gently turn the person's head so they look to the right.
- **End position #2:** Gently turn the person's head so they look to the left.



Head tilt (Lateral cervical rotation)

- **Hand positions:** Place one hand on top of the person's shoulder and the other hand on their head at the side, near the top.
- **Start position:** Position the person's head so they look forward.
- **End position #1:** Gently push with the top hand to stretch to the right, pressing gently on the hand on the shoulder to provide more stretch through the side of the neck.
- **End position #2:** Repeat the stretch to the left.



Front and back head tilt (Anterior/Posterior head tilt)

- **Hand positions:** Place one hand at the base of the person's head and the other hand on the top of their head, with your fingers resting on their forehead.
- **Start position:** Position the person's head so they look forward.
- **End position #1:** Gently tilt the person's head so they look up.
- **End position #2:** Gently tilt the person's head so they look down.



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