

Range of Motion Exercises

PURPOSE

1. To maintain range of motion in the trunk and upper extremity.
2. To be aware of and maintain good posture during healing.
3. To prevent tightness of chest muscles, thereby maintaining correct breathing patterns and full chest expansion.
4. To prevent or decrease upper extremity swelling.

EXERCISES

1. Deep breathing exercises.

Abdominal Breathing

Breathe in deeply through your nose, expanding the lower rib cage and pushing your stomach out. Then slowly breathe out through your mouth, pulling your stomach in and allowing the ribcage to fall and relax to force as much air as possible out of your lungs. Repeat 3-4 times. Rest.

Segmental Breathing

Cross your arms across your trunk, placing your hands on your lower ribcage. Breathe deeply and feel the ribcage expand. Try to expand the ribcage equally on both sides. Repeat 3-4 times. Rest.

2. Isometric exercises.

Lie on your back, with your arm elevated on 2-3 pillows. Make a tight fist, straighten your elbow hard and tighten all the muscles in your arm. Hold for a count of 5. Relax. Repeat.

3. Posture exercises.

As you inhale, pull your shoulders back and pinch your shoulder blades together. Relax as you exhale.

Place your hands behind your head. Bring your elbows together. Spread your elbows apart.

Swing your arms normally at your sides when walking.

4. Range of motion exercises

Chop & Lift

This exercise should be done while sitting in a chair with your feet flat on the floor. Clasp hands together. Start with your hands down by your right knee. Then lift as high as you can up over your left shoulder. You should turn your head, follow your hands with your eyes and keep your elbows as straight as possible. Chop back down across your body to your right knee. Do the same thing to the opposite side, lifting your arms from your left knee up over your right shoulder.

First Diagonal

This exercise can be done lying down, sitting or standing. Start with the arm down, back and out to the side, hand open, palm facing back. Keeping elbow straight, close your hand, turn your palm up and bring arm up and across your face. Your elbow will be about eye level. Return to the starting position by opening your hand, turning your palm down and taking your arm down, back and out to the side.

Second Diagonal

Start with your hand at opposite hip with wrist slightly bent downward and hand closed. Keeping elbow straight, open your hand, turn your thumb up, bringing your arm up and slightly out from your head. Return to the starting position by closing your hand, turning thumb down and moving arm back down toward your opposite hip.

Wand Exercise

Grasp a light stick in front of you with both hands. Breathe in deeply as you raise it over your head as high as you can. Exhale as you try to take it back behind your head. Inhale as you raise it back up, exhale as you return to starting position

Grasp stick behind your back with both hands. Start with hands resting in the small of your back, and then take the stick up your back as high as you can, inhaling as you lift. Exhale as you return to starting position.

Shoulder Stretch

Stand facing the wall, elbow bent and palms of your hands resting on the wall. Walk your fingers up the wall as high as possible. Then walk your fingers back down. Make a pencil mark at the highest point reached each day. This will help you observe your progress.

REMINDERS

1. DO NOT raise your arm above shoulder level until your drain has been removed.
2. DO NOT overdo when you first get home. Rest if you feel tired. Taking frequent short rests with your arm elevated is a good idea.
3. Avoid strenuous activities and any activities requiring prolonged use of your arm. Check with your surgeon to see when you can resume these activities.
4. Avoid excessive sun exposure to your arm.
5. Wear a loose fitting glove when doing household activities or gardening to prevent cuts, scratches or burns. If you do injure your hand or arm and it does not appear to be healing normally (red, warm, swollen), notify your physician.
6. If you notice any excessive swelling of your arm, elevate your arm above your head and shoulder level and perform the isometric exercise explained above. If the swelling persists, call your physician.