



Patient & Family Guide
2021

Exercises After Neck Surgery



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Exercises After Neck Surgery

The exercises in this guide will help you improve the range of motion (ROM) and strength in your neck and shoulder muscles after your neck surgery.

Your physiotherapist will go over the exercises that you should do, with you.

Remember these tips when exercising:

- Start with and keep good posture throughout the exercise. Keep your head and shoulders in line and your chin tucked in.
- **Do not exercise past the point of discomfort. You should feel a comfortable stretch with no pain.** Let pain be your guide.
- Continue all these exercises until your neck and shoulder movements and strength are back to normal.
- **If you are having radiation:**
 - › You can lose range of motion in your shoulder and neck. As tissue heals from radiation, it can get tight. While having radiation, do the exercises 2 times a day. Keep doing the exercises for 2 months after your last radiation treatment.

Neck ROM exercises

You can start these exercises as soon as your neck staples and drains are removed, or as recommended by your physiotherapist.

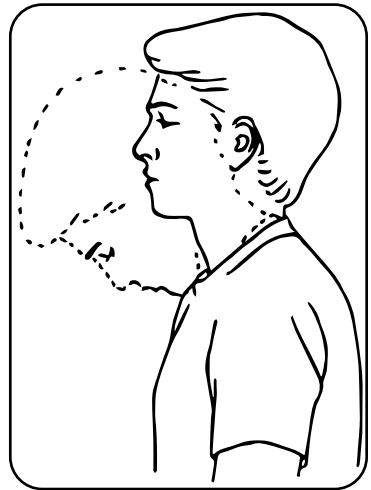
Starting position

Sit upright, with your neck supported, chin tucked and shoulders relaxed.

If these exercises cause dizziness, stop doing the exercise and tell your doctor and/or physiotherapist.

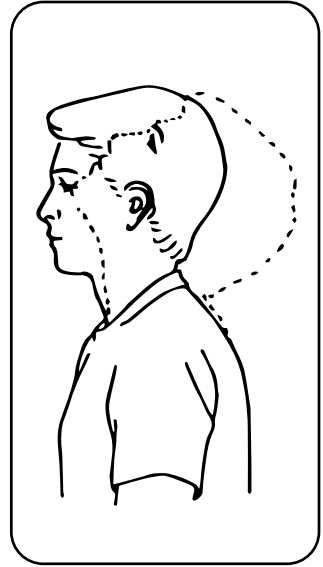
1. Neck flexion

- › Bring your chin down towards your chest until you feel a comfortable stretch in the back of your neck.
- › Hold for 15 to 30 seconds.
- › Return to starting position.
- › Repeat 3 to 5 times.
- › Do 3 sessions each day.



2. Neck extension

- › Look up towards the ceiling until you feel a comfortable stretch in the front of your neck.
- › Hold for 15 to 30 seconds.
- › Return to starting position.
- › Repeat 3 to 5 times.
- › Do 3 sessions each day.



3. Neck rotation

- › Turn your head to one side until you feel a comfortable stretch in the side of your neck.
- › Hold for 15 to 30 seconds.
- › Return to starting position.
- › Repeat on the other side.
- › Repeat 3 to 5 times.
- › Do 3 sessions each day.



4. Neck side bend

- › Bring your right ear towards your right shoulder until you feel a comfortable stretch in the left side of your neck. **Do not turn your head.** Keep looking straight ahead.
- › Hold for 15 to 30 seconds.
- › Return to starting position.
- › Repeat on left side.
- › Repeat 3 to 5 times.
- › Do 3 sessions each day.

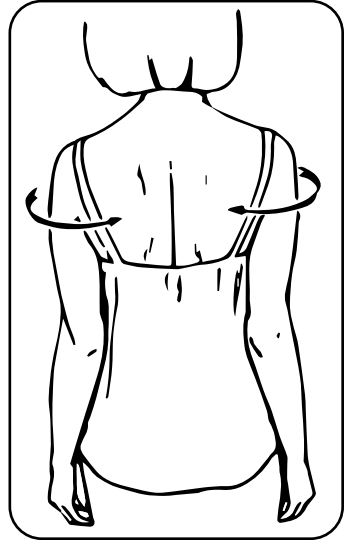


Shoulder exercises

These exercises should be started as recommended by your physiotherapist.

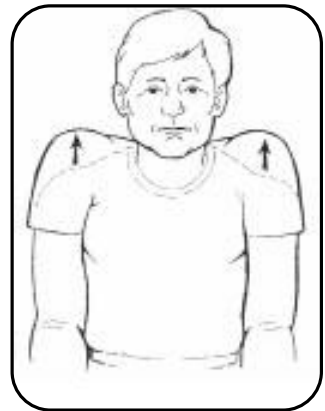
1. Squeeze shoulder blades

- › While sitting, keep your arms by your sides. Pinch your shoulder blades together as shown.
- › Hold for 5 seconds.
- › Return to starting position.
- › Repeat 5 times.
- › Do 3 sessions each day.



2. Shoulder shrugs

- › Begin with your shoulders relaxed.
- › Slowly lift your shoulders up towards your ears.
- › Return to starting position.
- › Repeat 5 to 10 times.
- › Do 3 sessions each day.



3. Assisted shoulder flexion

- › Clasp your hands in front of you.
- › Lift your arms up over your head.
- › Use your strong arm to help your weaker one.
- › Repeat 5 to 10 times.
- › Do 3 sessions each day.



4. Wall walking: forward

- › Stand facing the wall.
- › Place the finger tips of your affected arm on the wall.
- › Use your fingers to climb up the wall until you feel a comfortable stretch.
- › Hold for 15 to 30 seconds.
- › Slide your fingers slowly down the wall.
- › Repeat 3 to 5 times.
- › Do 3 sessions each day.



5. Wall walking: sideways

- › Stand beside the wall.
- › Place the finger tips of your affected arm on the wall.
- › Use your fingers to climb up the wall until you feel a comfortable stretch.
- › Hold for 15 to 30 seconds.
- › Slide your fingers slowly down the wall.
- › Repeat 3 to 5 times.
- › Do 3 sessions each day.



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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.