

Self Care Exercises

Functional Tests



DISCOVER
HEALTH
chiropractic
PLLC

Discover Balance & Restore Your Health
Dr. Reanna Plancich

Hands-Up Stretch

GOAL: Duration 20 minutes

Allows your head, neck and shoulders to return to a more balanced and neutral position.

INSTRUCTION:

Lay on the floor with your hips and knees bent to 90 degrees. A chair or some other support should be used to help support the feet.



Rest your arms on the floor in the shape of a football goal post in ‘cowboy surrender’ position (arms straight out and elbows bent at 90 degrees).

Hold this position for 20 minutes, bringing your arms down for temporary reprieve if you lose circulation in your fingers/arms.

Repeat this once daily until this position no longer provides a stretch. At this time consult your chiropractor for the next part of this stretch sequence.

***NOTES**

It is safer to have the knees too close to the chest, than too far away.

The stretch should be mild at all times!

Too much intensity could result in a lack of progress or injury.

If the stretch is too intense, you may begin by moving your forearms away from your head.

As the stretch becomes easier, bring hands towards head until you are in the correct position as described above.

Neck Flexor Strengthening Exercise

GOAL: Duration 30 seconds

Improves forward head posture and assists in correcting improper muscle recruitment.

INSTRUCTION:

Starting Position: Lie on your back on the floor with arms at your sides and legs straight out. Provide resistance with your first while trying to tuck the chin. There should be very little motion. Use the fingers and thumbs of the wrapped hand to monitor the superficial neck muscles. If these fire or tighten, you are using the wrong muscles. Lift your head approximately one inch off the floor. Attempt to hold this position for 30 seconds without any obvious shaking or straining.

Action



*NOTE

Improper muscle recruitment typically occurs due to increased activity and shortening of the large cervical spine musculature and reduced activity and strength of the smaller flexor muscles. These exercises will increase the strength of cervical deep flexor muscles and decrease over-activity and tension in the sternocleidomastoid (SCM muscle).

Balance/Coordination Exercise

GOAL: Duration 30 seconds

To improve your proprioceptive sense of balance.

There are three aspects in your body that control and bring a sense of balance to the body (proprioception): ocular receptor (eye), labyrinth (inner ear), and mechanoreceptors (in the skin, joints, muscles, and tendons). By correcting head position, we can help normalize the vestibular apparatus (ear) as this informs the brain of the head's position and works to keep it perpendicular to the ground. The eyes provide the brain information regarding the body's relationship to the horizon. By closing your eyes, it puts greater challenge on mechanoreceptors, which provide information of the orientation of the head with respect to the body to maintain equilibrium.

INSTRUCTION: Starting Position

Place the back of a chair in front of you for reference and support if needed. Stand with eyes open comfortably with feet apart and knees with a soft bend. Concentrate on body balance: positioning of feet, knees, hips and shoulders.

Action (Stage 1)

With attention on body position, close your eyes. Practice standing with eyes closed to challenge your balance for up to 30 seconds. Try to avoid holding on to chair if possible.

Repeat daily.

Once mastered, move on to Stage 2.

Action (Stage 2)

Repeat above exercise with only one foot on the ground.

Keep hands free of chair and begin with eyes open, then eyes closed.

Your goal is to attain 20 seconds with the eyes closed on each foot.

Repeat daily.

*NOTE

If appropriate firing sequence cannot be attained with movement, try going through the actions without lifting your thigh, until appropriate gluteus isolation is possible, or attempt same action in a standing position.



Gluteal Recruitment Exercise

GOAL: Duration 30 seconds

To normalize muscle recruitment patterns and stabilize the spine by strengthening the gluteus, abdominal and lower back muscles. This is done in order to prevent pain, degeneration and instability. The gluteus muscles stabilize the opposite pelvis and lower spine. They also aid in extension of the leg. Weakness in this area can lead to overload of the joints and ligaments.

HIP EXTENSION INSTRUCTION:

Lie on your stomach and place a hand on the low back and bend the knee slightly on that side.

Starting Position



Raise the thigh from the ground without bending the knee any further.

Use your leg and gluteus muscles first followed by the lower back muscles.

Use your hands to check for the appropriate firing sequence.

Repeat on other side.

Action



*NOTE

If appropriate firing sequence cannot be attained with movement, try going through the actions without lifting your thigh until appropriate gluteus isolation is possible or attempt same action in a standing position.