

Occupational Therapy

Home Exercise Program for Arthritis

Purpose:

1. To increase or maintain joint motion
2. To increase or maintain muscle strength
3. To increase endurance (available energy)
4. To decrease symptoms of stiffness and soreness

General Instructions:

1. Exercises indicated by therapist are to be completed on a daily basis with rest between exercises.
2. It is normal to feel an increase in soreness when doing exercises. If the pain lasts for one hour or more after you have finished your exercises, do a little less next time.
3. If possible perform exercises after a warm shower/bath and/or an hour after taking an anti-inflammatory medication.

Repeat the circled exercise _____ times _____ times/day

Head

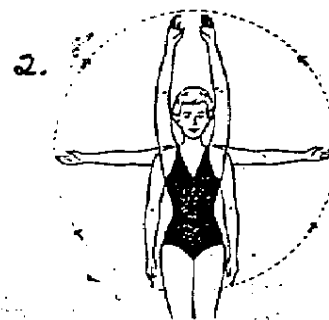
1. Roll your head very slowly in a clockwise direction. If a spot feels tight-hold stretch, but don't strain. Repeat in a counter-clockwise direction.



Shoulders

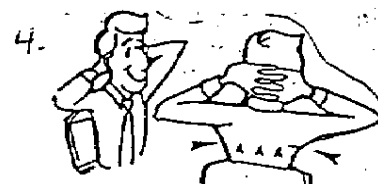
1. Shoulder Roll-Slowly roll your shoulders forward in a circular motion. Then roll your shoulders backward in the same circular motion.

2. Raise your arms as high as you can over your head, keeping your elbows straight. Then swing your arms out and down to your sides. Swing your arms in as big a circle as possible.



3. Raise arms to shoulder height, pull arms in front of body and then out to side.

4. Grasp your hands behind your neck and press your elbows back as far as you can. Return to starting position, then drop your arms and relax. Repeat.



5. Flying- Elevate arms straight out to your side (at shoulder level) with palms up and rotate arms in a circular motion.

Arthritis and Everyday Living

Always use good posture when performing any activity.

Whenever possible, sit rather than stand (keeping hips, knees, and ankles at a 90 degree angle). Frequently change positions.

Try sliding instead of lifting objects.

If you must lift, use good body mechanics:

- Bend at the knees
- Pick up object with both hands
- Use the larger muscle groups

Carry objects close to your body.

Prioritize the order in which chores have to be done.

Perform work at a moderate pace.

Alternate between light and heavy chores.

Reduce the number of trips to particular areas.

Store most used items in easily accessible areas.

Use lightweight equipment.

Avoid overly stressful activities, which can cause joint damage.

Don't overdo it. Pace yourself, scheduling regular rest intervals in order to increase endurance. Even five to ten minutes of rest during an activity can reduce pain and stress.