Canadian Chiropractic Guideline Initiative
ADVANCING EXCELLENCE IN CHIROPRACTIC CARE

Date: _____

Shoulder Blade Motor Control and Strengthening Exercises

(intermediate-advanced)

Click on the title or find all the exercises on CCGI YouTube

✓	Exercises	Instructions	Notes
	 **Multiple scapula motor control**	Poor muscle control around the shoulder blades can increase pain and strain of th neck. There are three exercises that you can do for your shoulder blades and arms. The first exercise will relax and ease any tension in the muscles on top of your shoulders. It can give you pain relief. • First, lie on your left side with your arms resting on two pillows. Roll your right shoulder blade back and across your ribcage towards the centre of your back. Hold the position for 10 seconds. Repeat 5 times. Repeat lying on the right side for the left shoulder blade. • The second exercise helps you to improve the control of your shoulder blades while mimicking work you may do with your arms. It trains you to ease any tension in the muscles on top of your shoulders while you're using your arms. Sit and correct your posture and draw your shoulder blades back and across your ribcage as you hav already practiced. Concentrate on holding your shoulder blade position, then mov your arms forwards and backwards, out to the side and turn your forearms outwards. Do not lift your arms more than 30 degrees. Perform each exercise 5 times and repeat this set 3 times. When you feel confident that you can do the exercise keeping your shoulder blades gently back, hold a 250 gram can in each hand as a small weight. • The third exercise is simply raising alternate arms forward as far up as you can Make sure that you maintain good posture, especially concentrating on lifting the base of your skull off the top of your neck, and then, as your raise your arms, keep your thumb facing upwards. Perform 3 sets of 5 left and right arm raises.	
	 **Scapular retraction (sitting)**	In a sitting position with your chin tucked in, retract your shoulder blades towards your spine. Do not raise your shoulders, especially if you have a shoulder condition. Maintain the contraction for two to three seconds, do 2 series of 10 repetitions daily.	
	 **Scapular retraction with weights (inclined position)**	While maintaining your trunk forward, raise a small weight or a dumbbell towards the ceiling while retracting the shoulder blade. Do 3 series of 10 repetitions daily.	

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https://www.canadianchiropracticguidelines.ca/

Bussières AE, Stewart G, Al-Zoubi F, Decina P, Descarreaux M, Hayden J, et al. The Treatment of Neck Pain–Associated Disorders and Whiplash-Associated Disorders: A Clinical Practice Guideline. Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics. 2016;39(8):523-64.e27.