

Rotator Cuff Exercises

Before you start

The exercises described below are to help you strengthen the muscles in your shoulder (especially the rotator cuff, the muscles that help circular motion). These exercises should not cause you pain. If the exercise hurts, stop. Start again with a lighter weight.

Stretch your arms and shoulders, and do pendulum exercises: Bend from the waist, letting your arms hang down. Keep your arm and shoulder muscles relaxed, and move your arms slowly back and forth. Perform each exercise slowly: Lift your arm to a slow count of 3 and lower your arm to a slow count of 6.

Keep repeating each exercise until your arm is tired. Use a light enough weight (3 lbs is a good place to start) that you don't get tired until you've done the exercise about 20 to 30 times.

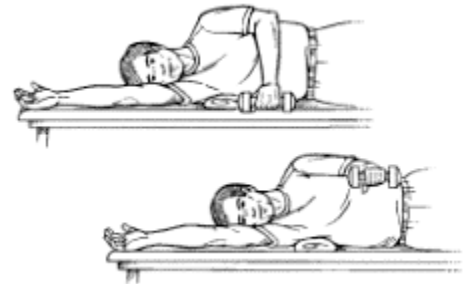
Do all 4 exercises 3 to 5 times a week.

Exercise 1

Start by lying on your stomach on a table or a bed. Put your left arm out at shoulder level with your elbow bent to 90° and your hand down. Keep your elbow bent, and slowly raise your left hand. Stop when your hand is level with your shoulder. Lower the hand slowly. Repeat the exercise until your arm is tired. Then do the exercise with your right arm.



Exercise 1



Exercise 2

Exercise 2

Lie on your right side with a rolled-up towel under your right armpit. Stretch your right arm above your head. Keep your left arm at your side with your elbow bent to 90° and the forearm resting against your chest, palm down. Roll your left shoulder out, raising the left forearm until it's level with your shoulder. (Hint: This is like the backhand swing in tennis.) Lower the arm slowly. Repeat the exercise until your arm is tired. Then do the exercise with your right arm.

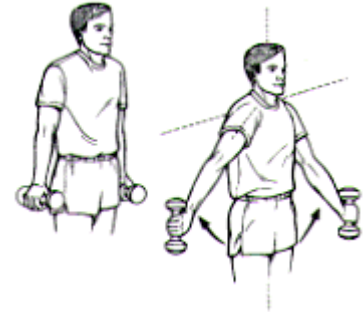
Exercise 3

Exercise 3

Lie on your right side. Keep your left arm along the upper side of your body. Bend your right elbow to 90°. Keep the right forearm resting on the table. Now roll your right shoulder in, raising your right forearm up to your chest. (Hint: This is like the forehand swing in tennis.) Lower the forearm slowly. Repeat the exercise until your arm is tired. Then do the exercise with your left arm.

Exercise 4 (a “must” for paddlers)

In a standing position, start with your arms halfway between the front and side of your body, thumbs down. Raise your arms until almost level (about a 45° angle). Don't lift beyond the point of pain. Slowly lower your arms. Repeat the exercise until your arms are tired.



Exercise 4

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