

Upper Back Pain Rehabilitation Exercises

You may do all of these exercises right away.

- **Pectoralis stretch:** Stand in a doorway or corner with both arms on the wall slightly above your head. Slowly lean forward until you feel a stretch in the front of your shoulders. Hold 15 to 30 seconds. Repeat 3 times.
- **Thoracic extension:** While sitting in a chair, clasp both arms behind your head. Gently arch backward and look up toward the ceiling. Repeat 10 times. Do this several times per day.
- **Arm slide on wall:** Sit or stand with your back against a wall and your elbows and wrists against the wall. Slowly slide your arms upward as high as you can while keeping your elbows and wrists against the wall. Do 3 sets of 10.
- **Scapular squeeze:** While sitting or standing with your arms by your sides, squeeze your shoulder blades together and hold for 5 seconds. Do 3 sets of 10.
- **Mid-trap exercise:** Lie on your stomach on a firm surface and place a folded pillow underneath your chest. Place your arms out straight to your sides with your elbows straight and thumbs toward the ceiling. Slowly raise your arms toward the ceiling as you squeeze your shoulder blades together. Lower slowly. Do 3 sets of 15. Progress to holding soup cans or small weights in your hands.
- **Thoracic stretch:** Sit on the floor with your legs out straight in front of you. Hold your mid-thighs with your hands. Curl your head and neck toward your belly button. Hold for a count of 15. Repeat 3 times.
- **Quadruped arm/leg raise:** Get down on your hands and knees. Tighten your abdominal muscles to stiffen your spine. While keeping your abdominals tight, raise one arm and the opposite leg away from you. Hold this position for 5 seconds. Lower your arm and leg slowly and alternate sides. Do this 10 times on each side.
- **Rowing exercise:** Tie a piece of elastic tubing around an immovable object and grasp the ends in each hand. Keep your forearms vertical and your elbows at shoulder level and bent to 90 degrees. Pull backward on the band and squeeze your shoulder blades together. Repeat 10 times. Do 3 sets.



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Scapular squeeze



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Rowing exercise