



# BACK TO BASICS NECK AND SHOULDERS EDITION

## A SMARTER WAY TO STRENGTHEN YOUR NECK AND SHOULDERS

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# BACK TO BASICS NECK AND SHOULDER EDITION

Please do these exercises with quality not quantity in mind. Hold for breath cycles and complete the repetition number that feels good with your anatomy, repetition ranges are approximate.

## Breathing

- 📌 Lie face down with forehead on hands.
- 📌 Breathe into the lower back and sides. Let the upper back and shoulders relax.
- 📌 Perform 20 diaphragmatic breaths.
- 📌 **Face Up Option:** with hands at your sides.
- 📌 Feel the intra-abdominal pressure you create with your inhale.
- 📌 On the exhale set your neck posture (chin tuck) and rib hip - depending on your posture.

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## Lying Neck Turns on the Exhale

- ▣ Lie on your back and align your neck with a gentle chin tuck.
- ▣ As you exhale gently turn your head to the side to a comfortable place that stays out of pain. Lead the turn with your eyes.
- ▣ Complete some breath cycles with your head turned and just relax into it.
- ▣ Inhale has you come through the centre and go side to side. 5 x left and right.

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## Reach and Rib Grab Turns, Full Arm Reaches and Play

- ▣ Position yourself in a side lying position with knees at 90 degrees to hips and feet stacked. Support your head on a foam if needed for comfort.
- ▣ Extend the bottom arm out with your palm up, and untuck the shoulder so you are not lying right on your shoulder.
- ▣ Take your top arm and give your ribcage a hug.
- ▣ Roll forward on the inhale and exhale as you roll away from the bottom arm. Turn your chin to follow your shoulder.
- ▣ Hold open position for breath cycles for 1 min per side.
- ▣ Add some long reaches with your top arm. Play with the positions overhead (rainbow) and hold the arm open for breath cycles while you bend your elbow and reach hand (fingers spread) overhead.
- ▣ Repeat at least 6 x left and right or for 1 minute minimum per side.

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## On Your Elbows Setting Shoulders And Roll To Open Up

- ▣ Position yourself on your elbows, with your elbows lined up under your shoulders, push your elbows into the floor and center your shoulder joint so you are not shrugging.
- ▣ Bend one knee and lift it off the floor and then roll away onto one elbow planting your foot on the ground and reaching your hand to the ceiling.
- ▣ Gently turn your head to look at your fingertips.
- ▣ Roll back to the center and roll to the opposite side.
- ▣ Go slow and play with this amazing movement.
- ▣ Perform 6 Reps on each side.

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## Shoulder Turns (Internal and External Rotations)

- ▣ Position yourself in a side lying position, supporting your head with your bottom arm or small pillow. Create a straight line between your bottom hand (palm down) and your bottom leg.
- ▣ Make a light fist or take a ball in your top hand which is perpendicular to the ceiling. Make sure your top shoulder is not in a shrugged position.
- ▣ Rotate your shoulder through the internal and external range. Make a light fist or squeeze the ball gently as you turn in and out.
- ▣ 10 turns in each direction, change sides.

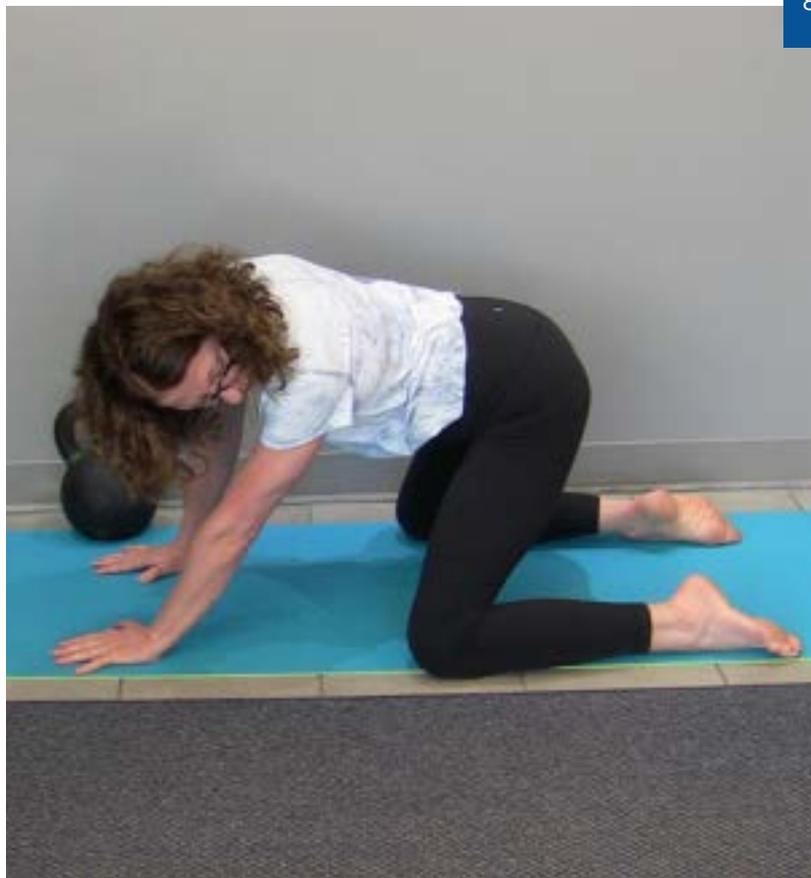
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## Get Up Movement To Elbow with a Neck Check Turn

- ▣ Lie on your back with one knee bent and one arm perpendicular to the ceiling. The opposite arm and leg are on an angle off to the side. The exact spot to place them is found through practice.
- ▣ Make a light fist and punch the fist up to the ceiling and then pull it down “packing” the shoulder.
- ▣ Align your chin and neck posture.
- ▣ With ease, roll to your elbow, pressing your elbow into the ground and centering your shoulder.
- ▣ Gently move your neck down to look at your elbow and back up to your fist, then roll slowly back to the floor with no shrugging.
- ▣ Repeat up to 3x per side.

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## Frog With Neck Nods

- ▮ Spread your knees wide.
- ▮ Keeping the back in neutral, hinge the hips back towards your heels.
- ▮ Add neck turns to look at the opposite foot as you hinge your hips back towards your heels.
- ▮ Change the focus point to different heights as your rock back changing the angle of your neck rotation. (Low, mid and to the ceiling within comfort.)
- ▮ Only move through comfort or mild tightness.
- ▮ Breathe deeply throughout and repeat at least 6 times per side.

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## Standing Shoulder Rotations

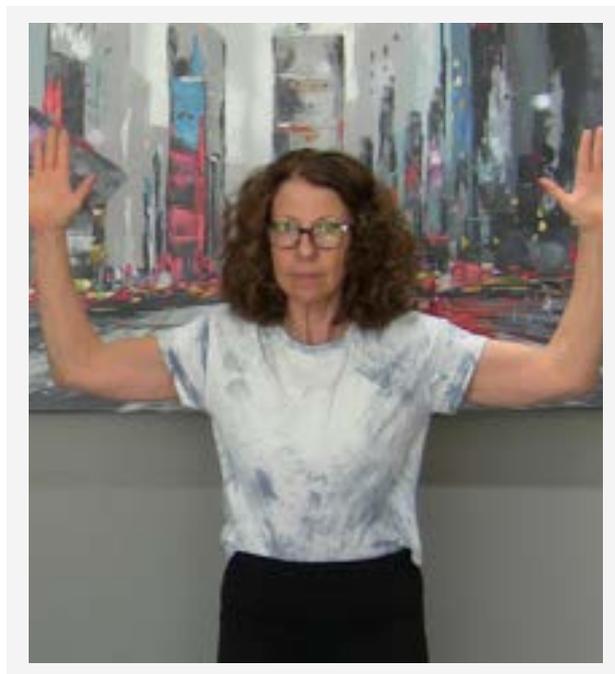
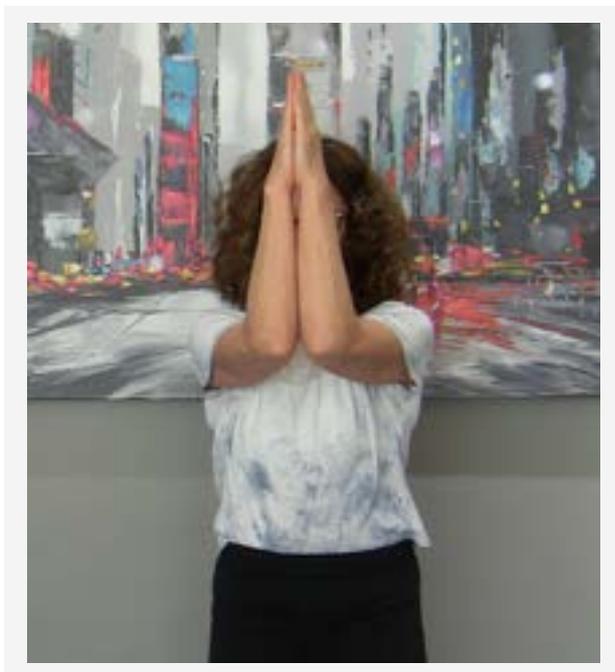
### Controlled Articular Rotations

### Internal and External

- From standing staggered (one foot in front of the other) position, adjust your posture to be aligned and tall. Rotate your arms slowly with as big a range of motion you can access from the shoulder without moving the rest of your body. Go slowly so you can access and improve your shoulder mobility.
- Perform 10 rotations** - this move can be done with arms at less than 90 degrees if it's more comfortable. Change the front foot and repeat.

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## Standing Scapular Retractions and Protractions

- └ Standing with feet staggered (one foot in front of the other), adjust your posture to be aligned and tall.
- └ Bring your arms to a 90-degree position and retract your shoulder blades together without shrugging.
- └ Then move your elbows together and then apart. Feel your shoulder blades moving.
- └ **Perform 10 rotations** - change the front foot and repeat.

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# Controlled Articular Cervical Movements

- ▣ Standing with feet hip width apart, align your posture as best you can, move your head slowly through all movements as tolerated.
- ▣ Circles, side to side (Lateral Flexion), plus up and down (Flexion/Extension), and move as described below:
- ▣ Neck Rotation Plus Flexion to Opposite Side Rotation and Extension: move the head and vision to look down to one side, and then move to look up and away to the opposite side.
- ▣ Go slowly to access the range of motion that you can without pain.
- ▣ Perform 2- 6 times in each direction.

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## Overhead Shoulder Range of Motion

- ▣ Lie on your back with knees bent, both feet shoulder width apart on the floor. Set your neck and rib-hip connection.
- ▣ Take a light resistance band, strap, or dowel in your hands with the width as wide as you need to have the back of your hands get on or close to the floor when you reach overhead.
- ▣ Feel your shoulder blades on the floor and try to avoid shrugging as you go overhead.
- ▣ Perform 10 overhead passes slowly with your feet on the floor.

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## Add Core Work with Shoulder and Neck Rotations

- ▣ Find the reverse table top position (feet off the floor with neck and back set), with a band between your hands and your knees over your hips.
- ▣ Slowly lower one heel to the ground and gently press it into the floor, then move arms overhead to access your overhead range of motion. Once there, breathe deeply maintaining your low back position (no arching).
- ▣ You can add neck rotations if you can maintain the core and breath control.
- ▣ Exhale as you rotate your neck to the side and use vision to drive the movement by looking at the floor of the side your head is turned to.
- ▣ Perform 3 times with each leg or as tolerated.

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## Scapular Mobility

- Find your neutral back on hands and knees. Without moving your spinal position drop your chest to the floor and retract or pinch your shoulder blades together and towards your spine. Now push the floor away and protract or pull your shoulder blades apart and away from your spine.
- Perform 10 times.

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- Bear Hold:** Find neutral back. Evenly distribute your weight between hands, knees and feet - tucking your back toes under.
- Slowly lift your knees off the floor and hover your body for 1-3 breath cycles depending on your strength to hold your posture in this position and keep breathing through your core.
- Perform 2-3 times.

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## High Arm Plank Hold and Possibly Lower to the Floor

- From the all fours neutral back position, step back into a solid high arm plank position.
- Keep the posture and breathe for 1-3 breaths if you can maintain the position. Keep your neck inline.
- Consider a slow lower to the floor if you are ready and able to lower the body in one plane, without losing the core position - including your neck.
- Perform 2-5 reps as tolerated.

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## Half Kneeling Shoulder Controlled Articular Rotations

- From the half kneeling position rotate your arms slowly with as big a range of motion you can access from the shoulder without moving the rest of your body. Go slowly so you can access and improve your shoulder mobility.
- Perform 2 slow circles on each side** - palms facing each other as you circle forward and up then palms rotate outwards (thumbs down) once arms sweep overhead and down to your sides. Then rewind the rotation.

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# McGill Position Lift

- ▣ Position yourself on your back with one knee bent and one leg extended out.
- ▣ Align your neck and back by decreasing the low back curve a little if needed and lightly supporting your head.
- ▣ Place your tongue on the roof of your mouth with your teeth gently closed.
- ▣ Create a lift of your head, sternum (breastbone) and heel 3 inches off the floor. Keep your head from bending up into flexion too much. Feel the activation of your front core by closing the connection between the bottom of your rib cage and the top of your hips.
- ▣ Hold for 1-3 breaths but do not hold longer than tolerated in the neck. Switch knees and repeat. Perform 2 times per side gradually holding for more breath cycles.

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## Half Kneeling Band Row

If you don't have a band, just use your arms.

- ▣ From a half kneeling position, check the tension of the band by pulling it apart. Allow just enough tension at the start so you can create more tension in the band while pulling it apart.
- ▣ Ensure you are not putting tension in your wrists or into your neck, and yet work between the shoulder blades to retract them - move them together towards your spine.
- ▣ Perform 10 pulls and then change knees.
- ▣ Use a foam or pillow to support your knee if needed.

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## Lying Y - Cross Taps

- ▣ Lie on your back in a bridge position.
- ▣ Place your arms in a comfortable Y position overhead with the back of the hands on the floor.
- ▣ Move one hand to support your head and turn your head to look at the opposite hand.
- ▣ Lift your hand up and across to the outside of the opposite knee.
- ▣ Watch your hand as you cross it over to your opposite knee feeling a closure across the front side of your torso.
- ▣ Exhale as you lift the hand up and across. Hold the closed position for a count of 2 and return the hand to the floor as you continue to watch your hand and turn your head in doing so.
- ▣ Perform up to 6 times per side as tolerated.



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Edgemont Chiropractic Clinic

Questions?

✉ [sheila@sheilahamilton.ca](mailto:sheila@sheilahamilton.ca)

**SHEILA HAMILTON**  
MOVEMENT GARDEN

Edgemont Chiropractic Clinic

101-3155 Highland Blvd

North Vancouver, BC, V7R 2X5

604-986-5371

[edgemontchiro.com](http://edgemontchiro.com)