

Rotator Cuff Strengthening Program

Shoulder Retractions – Begin the exercise by being seated in a chair with your trunk upright. Slowly retract, or pull, your shoulder blades backwards as if you are attempting to force your shoulder blades to touch together on your back. Hold for a count of three seconds, then slowly relax your shoulders forward. Focus on maintaining an upright trunk position while performing the exercise. Repeat this exercise for a total of 20 repetitions.

Start Position



End Position



Lying Lateral Raise – Begin the exercise by lying on your stomach with your right arm off the bed or couch. While your shoulder blade is retracted (as described previously), slowly raise your right arm upwards to form a 90 degree angle with your torso. Concentrate on keeping your shoulder blade retracted throughout the exercise. Slowly lower your arm towards the floor and relax your shoulder blade. Repeat this exercise with both arms for 15 repetitions for each arm.

Start Position



End Position



Lying “Y” Arm Raise – Begin the exercise by lying on your stomach on a bed or couch with your right arm off the side. While your shoulder blade is retracted (as described previously), slowly raise your arm upwards to form an arm of a “Y” with your torso. Focus on maintaining your shoulder blade in a retracted position throughout the exercise. Slowly lower your arm down toward the floor and relax your shoulder blade. Repeat this exercise with both arms for 15 repetitions for each arm.

Start Position



End Position



Empty Can Arm Raise – Begin the exercise by starting in a standing position with your arms at your side and your thumb pointing behind you. While your shoulder blades are retracted (as described previously), slowly raise your arms to form a “V” shape, keeping your thumbs pointing down towards the ground. Continue to raise your arms until your shoulders are at a 75 degree angle and your hands are below shoulder height. Be sure to keep your thumbs pointed towards the ground and your arms straight. Slowly lower your arms to your side and relax your shoulder blades. Repeat this exercise for 15 repetitions.

Start Position



End Position



Full Can Arm Raise – Begin the exercise by starting in a standing position with your arms at your side and your thumb pointing in front of you. While your shoulder blades are retracted (as described previously), slowly raise your arms to form a “V” shape, keeping your thumbs pointing up towards the ceiling. Continue to raise your arms until your shoulders are at a 75 degree angle and your hands are below shoulder height. Be sure to keep your thumbs pointed upwards at the ceiling and your arms straight. Slowly lower your arms to your side and relax your shoulder blades. Repeat this exercise for 15 repetitions.

Start Position



End Position



Front/Lateral Raise – Begin the exercise by standing with your arms at your side. To perform the Front Raise, slowly raise your arms upwards in front of you while your shoulder blades are retracted (as described previously) until your arms are at shoulder level. To perform the Lateral Raise, slowly raise your arms upwards at your side while your shoulder blades are retracted until your arms are at shoulder level. Focus on maintaining your shoulder blades in a retracted state throughout the exercise. When your arms reach shoulder level, slowly lower your arms downwards to your side and relax your shoulder blades. Repeat this exercise for 15 repetitions for each arm raise exercise.

Start Position



End Position - Front Raise



Start Position



End Position - Lateral Raise



Sidelying External Rotation – Begin the exercise by lying on your left side with your right elbow bent at a 90 degree angle and resting on your right side with your hand on your stomach. With your right shoulder blade retracted (as described above), slowly raise your right hand into the air while keeping your right elbow resting on your right side. Slowly lower your hand back down onto your stomach and relax your shoulder blade. Repeat this exercise with both arms for 15 repetitions for each arm.

End Position

Start Position

