

EXERCISES FOR THORACIC-OUTLET SYNDROME

At the beginning, each exercise is done 10 times in succession twice a day. As the shoulders and neck gain strength, the number of times each exercise is done consecutively can be increased. The six exercises follow:

1. Stand erect with the arms at the sides, holding in each hand a 2-pound weight (sandbags, or bottles, jars or sacks filled with sand). (a.) Shrug the shoulders forward and upward. (b.) Relax. (c.) Shrug the shoulders backward and upward. (d.) Relax. (e.) Shrug the shoulders upward. (f.) Relax and repeat.
2. Stand erect with the arms out straight from the sides at shoulder level; hold a 2-pound weight in each hand (palms should be down). (a.) Raise the arms sideways and up until the backs of the hands meet above the head (keep elbows straight). (b.) Relax and repeat. Note: As strength improves and exercises 1 and 2 become easier, weights should be made heavier; increase to 5 and later to 10 pounds.
3. Stand facing a corner of the room with one hand on each wall, arms at shoulder level, palms forward, elbows bent and abdominal muscles contracted. (a.) Slowly let the upper part of the trunk lean forward and press to the chest into the corner. Inhale as the body leans forward. (b.) Return to the original position by pushing out with the hands. Exhale with this movement.
4. Stand erect with the arms at the sides. (a.) Bending the neck to the left, attempt to touch the left ear to the left shoulder without shrugging the shoulder. (b.) Bending the neck to the right, attempt to touch the right ear to the right shoulder without shrugging the shoulder. (c.) Relax and repeat.
5. Lie face down with the hands clasped behind the back. (a.) Raise the head and chest from the floor as high as possible while pulling the shoulders backward and the chin in. Hold this position for a count of three. Inhale as the chest is raised. (b.) Exhale and return to the original position. (c.) Repeat.
6. Lie down on the back with arms at the sides, with a rolled towel or small pillow under the upper part of the back between the shoulder blades and no pillow under the head. (a.) Inhale slowly and raise the arms upward and backward overhead. (b.) Exhale and lower the arms to the sides. (c.) Repeat 5 to 20 times.