

9 Hand Exercises for Stroke Patients with Pictures

April 10, 2017



Are you trying to improve hand function after stroke?

If so, these hand exercises can help. And we made sure to include something for everyone.

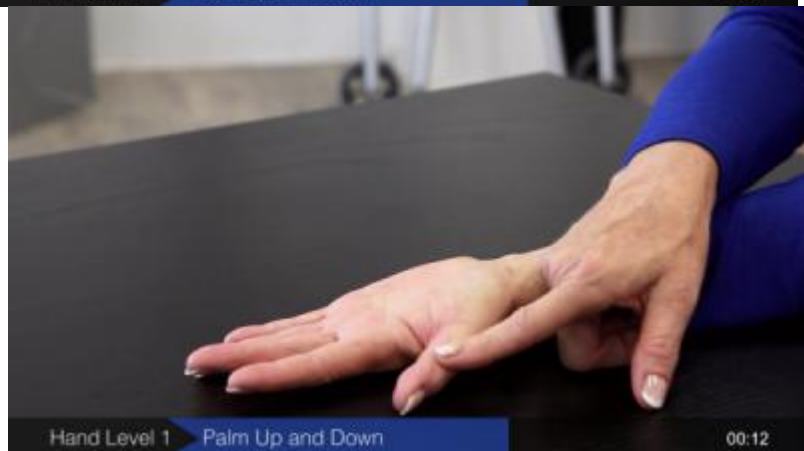
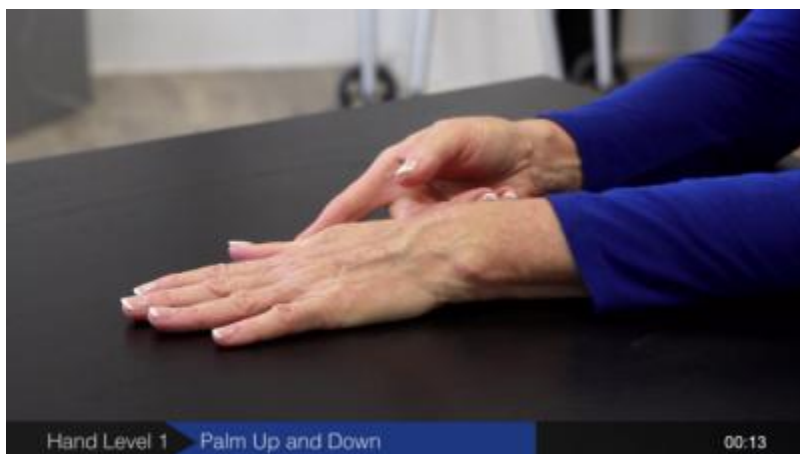
The following exercises are organized from easiest (Level 1) to hardest (Level 3).

Level 1 Hand Exercises for Stroke Patients

You will need: A tabletop

If you are starting out with little hand movement, then these exercises are a great place to start. They can all be practiced passively (by using your non-affected hand to assist your affected hand) until you can practice them actively (by performing them on your own).

Exercise 1: Palm Up and Down



Place your hand on a table top with your palm facing up. Then, use your non-affected hand to help flip your palm down.

Repeat back and forth. Palm up, palm down. Repeat 10 times total.

You can see that Barbara is only using her finger to help assist her hand moving back and forth. Be sure to follow suit.

This encourages you to try and move your hand yourself as much as possible, which helps your brain rewire itself.

Exercise 2: Wrist Bend Movement



While keeping your elbow on the table, use your non-affected hand to stretch your affected hand at the wrist. Stretch backward, then stretch forward. Perform this movement slowly for a total of 5 reps.

Exercise 3: Wrist Side Movement



Place your affected hand on the table with your palm down.

Then, use your non-affected hand to slide your hand to the left and then to the right. Focus on initiating the movement solely from your wrist.

Repeat slowly for a total of 5 reps. (Back and forth is one rep.)

Level 2 Hand Exercises for Stroke Patients

You will need: A tabletop, pen, and full water bottle

Once you have regained some movement in your hand, then advance onto these level 2 hand exercises.

If you're feeling ambitious, try doing all level 1 exercises as a warm-up.

Exercise 1: Rolling Movement



Place your affected arm on the table and place a water bottle in your affected hand. Keep your hand and fingers relaxed.

Then, curl your fingers in and grasp the water bottle in your hand. Then release back down.

Repeat a total of 5 times.

Exercise 2: Wrist Curl

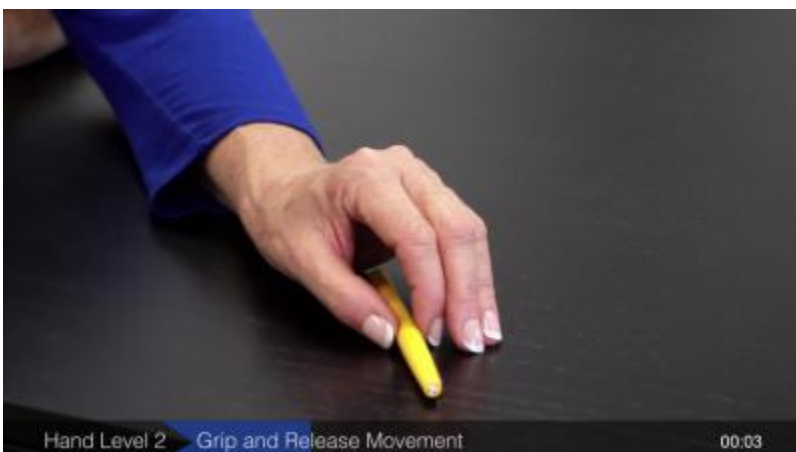


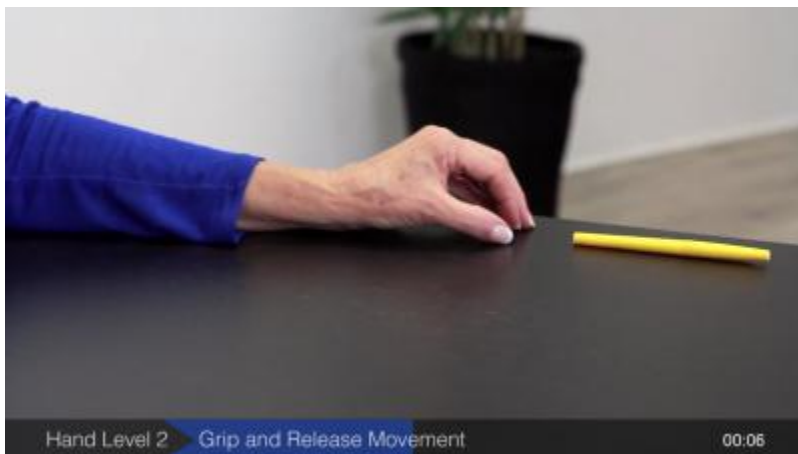
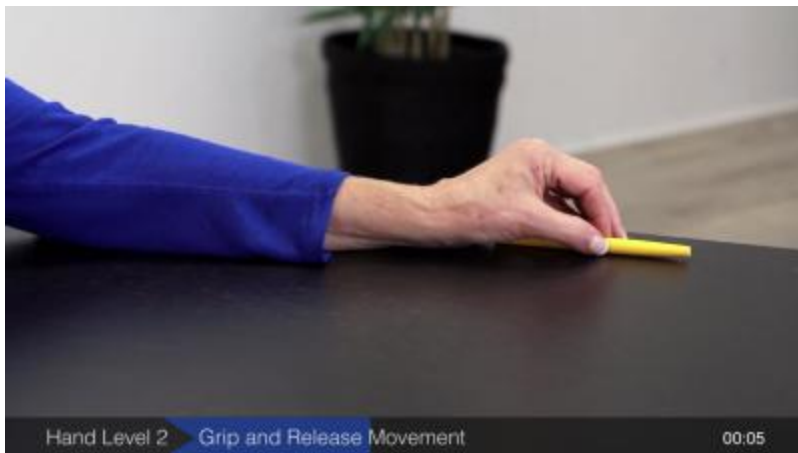
This exercise is much like a bicep curl, except for your wrist!

Grasp the water bottle still in your affected hand and use your non-affected hand to prop and support your arm.

Allow your wrist to stretch down, and then curl your wrist up. Repeat 10 times.

Exercise 3: Grip and Release





Place a pen to the side of the table and then grip it with your affected fingers.

Then, slide the pen across the table, and then release.

Make sure you grip the pen gently, using as little force as necessary to move the pen.

Repeat a total of 5 times back and forth across the table.

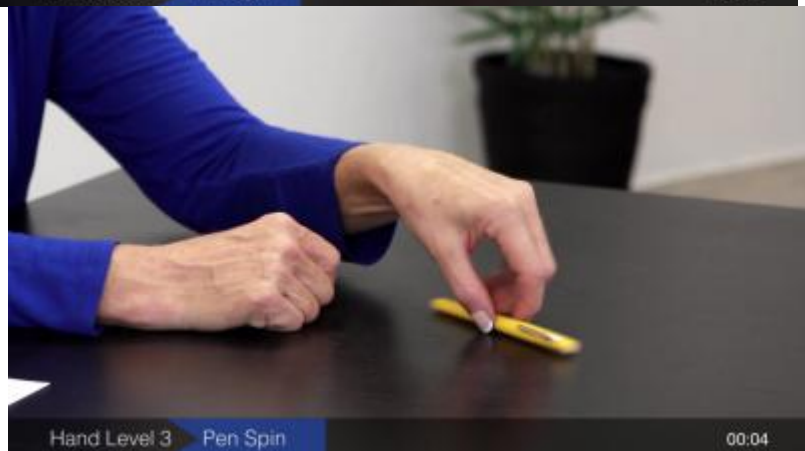
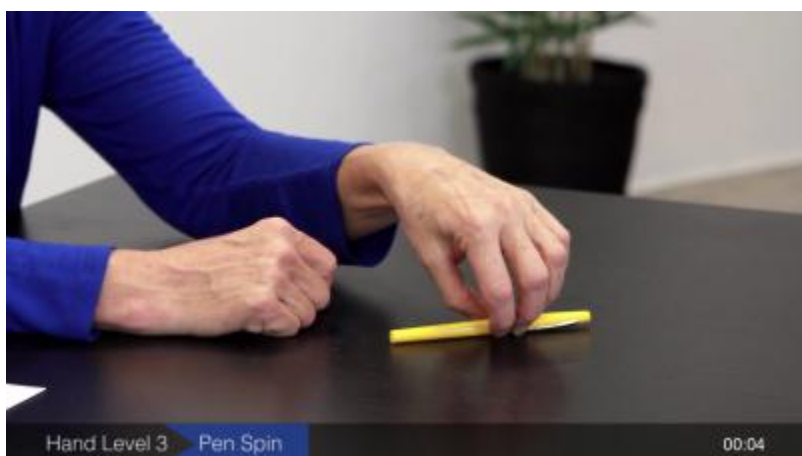
Level 3 Hand Exercises for Stroke Patients

You will need: A tabletop, pen, and 8 quarters

Alright, now we're moving onto the more complex movements.

These are great for stroke patients who have regained some movement in their hand and are looking for a challenge to keep pushing their progress forward.

Exercise 1: Pen Spin

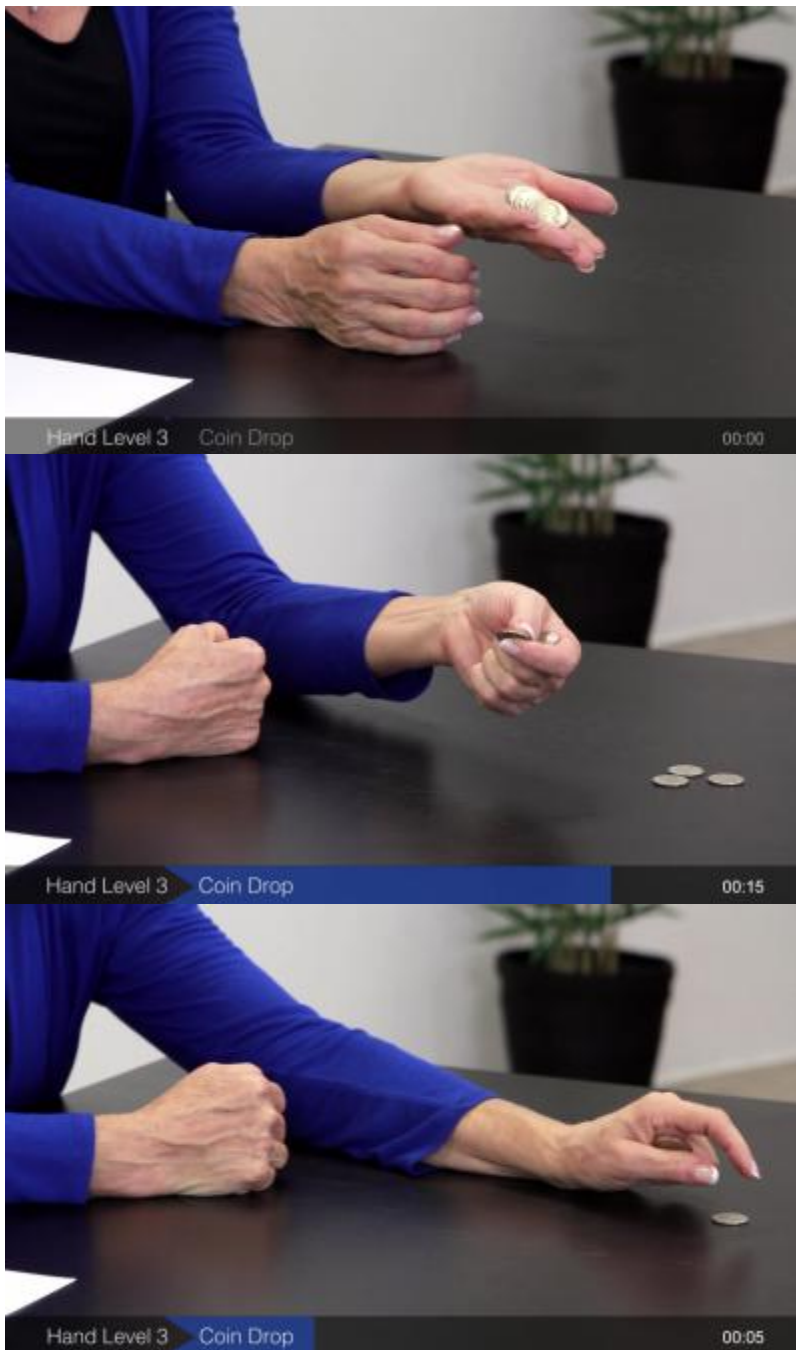


Place the pen on the table and use your thumb and fingers to spin it.

Try not to use your shoulder during this movement. You really want to isolate your thumb and fingers.

If you can, aim for speed during this exercise. Spin the pen quickly for 15 seconds.

Exercise 2: Coin Drop



Start by placing 8 quarters in a row in the palm of your affected hand. Then, use your thumb to slide one quarter down into your index finger and thumb, so that you end up pinching the quarter with your index finger and thumb.

Then, place the quarter down onto the table while keeping the other quarters in your hand using your other fingers.

Repeat and place each quarter down on the table one by one.

Exercise 3: Finger Curl



Bend your affected arm and place your elbow on the table.

Then, make little “O’s” with your fingers by bringing the tip of your index finger to the tip of your thumb. Pinch, and release.

Then, repeat with your middle, ring, and pinkie finger. Pinch, and release. Repeat on all 4 fingers for a total of 7 sets.