

Easy Arm Exercises for Stroke Patients

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These 5 easy arm exercises for stroke patients can be performed from any seated position.

If you have recovered some arm movement but still suffer from residual weakness, then these exercises are for you.

Let's get warmed up.

1. Shoulder Rolls

Simply roll your shoulders in big circles, completing 20 shoulder rolls forward and then 20 backward.

2. Torso Twists

Please attempt this warm up exercise only if you're able to sit in a perfectly straight, upright position.

From a seated position, breathe in and exhale as you turn your torso to the right, using your right arm to grab the seat behind you to help you twist even farther.

You can keep your left hand resting on your leg, or you can use it to actively push on the outside of your right leg to get even deeper into your twist. When you've held the stretch for about 3 seconds, return to center and inhale.

Exhale as you repeat on the other side and enjoy the deep, rejuvenating stretch. Alternate until you've completed 3 twists on each side, focusing on linking your breath to your movement.

3. Isometric Hold

The word 'isometric' simply means that no movement occurs. Instead, the muscle works in a still position.

For this isometric hold, you'll make two fists and place your right fist on top of your left. Angle your fists 45 degrees towards your face with your arms bent at 90 degrees.

Then, push down with your right fist while pushing up with your left fist. Your arms shouldn't move at all, but you'll really feel your biceps and triceps working.

Try holding for 20 seconds and then rest.

4. Trap Shrugs

Your trapezius is the large triangular muscle that covers the back of your neck and shoulders. While you do this exercise, keep the location of this muscle in mind so that you're targeting your trapezius and not your shoulders.

From a seated position, grab the edges of your chair and pull up while using your trapezius to make a shrugging motion. You won't have to lift your arms as high as you did during the shoulder shrugs. Instead, shrug just high enough to feel it in your traps.

Do 15 repetitions.

5. Seated Tricep Dips

In a seat that has armrests, grab your armrests right beneath your shoulders while keeping your elbows bent back behind you.

Then, push yourself up until your elbows are almost fully extended – but never locking – and then let yourself back down. The key is to keep your elbows back the entire time so that you're targeting your triceps specifically.

Try doing 5-15 repetitions, depending on your strength. And when you're ready for a real challenge, try walking your feet forward a little so that more of your body weight is on your arms instead of your legs.