

Upper Extremity Lymphedema Exercises

Perform all exercises _____ repetitions, _____ times a day.

Perform them slowly and hold 3-5 seconds. *Do not push into pain.*

1. Start by clearing the lymph nodes.

Neck – 10 times

Armpit/Axilla – 10 times

Elbows – 10 times

2. Diaphragmatic breathing

Inhale through your nose. As you breathe in, your stomach should push out and your upper chest should move as little as possible. Exhale through your mouth, letting your stomach sink back in as you slowly bend at the hips. *Repeat up to 5 repetitions.*



3. Neck movements

a. Bend your neck forward, chin to chest.



b. Tilt your head toward each shoulder



c. Gently look over each shoulder.



4. Chin tuck

Tuck your chin, keeping eyes looking straight ahead.



5. Shoulder blade squeeze

Gently squeeze shoulder blades down and back toward your spine, as if you were going to move them towards your opposite pocket.



6. Shoulder rolls

Shrug shoulders and roll your shoulders back to complete the circle.



7. Overhead reach

Raise arm in front of you as far as able and return to your side in thumbs up position.



8. Side movement

Lift arms out to side and return to your side with thumbs in up position.



9. Elbow flexion and extension

Bend your elbow, bringing your hand to your shoulder, and then straighten.



10. Forearm rotation

Turn your palms up and down slowly, keeping your elbow close to your body.



11. Wrist flexion and extension

Bend your wrist up and down.



12. Hand grasp

Open and close your hand.



Repeat all exercises in reverse order, starting with #12 and ending with node clearing.

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