

# Healthy Upper Back: Exercises

## Introduction

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Here are some examples of exercises for your upper back. Start each exercise slowly. Ease off the exercise if you start to have pain.

Your doctor or physical therapist will tell you when you can start these exercises and which ones will work best for you.

## How to do the exercises

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### Lower neck and upper back stretch

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slide 1 of 6

1. Stretch your arms out in front of your body. Clasp one hand on top of your other hand.
2. Gently reach out so that you feel your shoulder blades stretching away from each other.
3. Gently bend your head forward.
4. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds.
5. Repeat 2 to 4 times.

### Midback stretch

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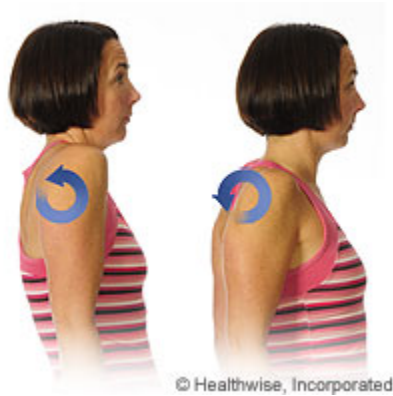


If you have knee pain, do not do this exercise.

1. Kneel on the floor, and sit back on your ankles.
2. Lean forward, place your hands on the floor, and stretch your arms out in front of you. Rest your head between your arms.
3. Gently push your chest toward the floor, reaching as far in front of you as possible.
4. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds.
5. Repeat 2 to 4 times.

## Shoulder rolls

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slide 3 of 6

1. Sit comfortably with your feet shoulder-width apart. You can also do this exercise while standing.
2. Roll your shoulders up, then back, and then down in a smooth, circular motion.
3. Repeat 2 to 4 times.

## Wall push-up

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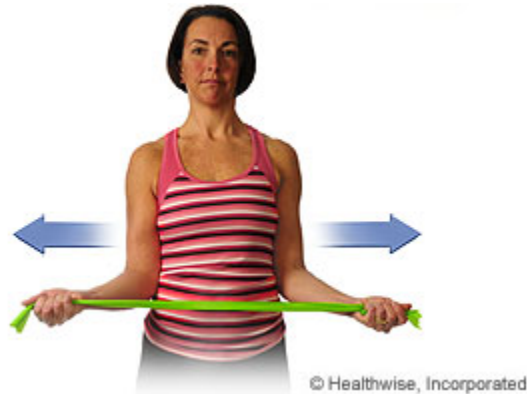
slide 4 of 6

1. Stand against a wall with your feet about 12 to 24 inches back from the wall. If you feel any pain when you do this exercise, stand closer to the wall.
2. Place your hands on the wall slightly wider apart than your shoulders, and lean forward.

3. Gently lean your body toward the wall. Then push back to your starting position. Keep the motion smooth and controlled.
4. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

## Resisted shoulder blade squeeze

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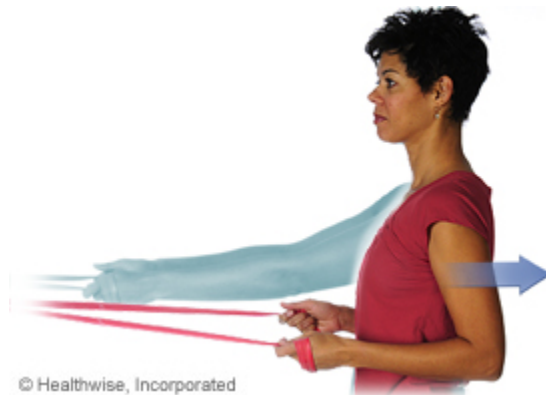
slide 5 of 6

For this exercise, you will need elastic exercise material, such as surgical tubing or Thera-Band.

1. Sit or stand, holding the band in both hands in front of you. Keep your elbows close to your sides, bent at a 90-degree angle. Your palms should face up.
2. Squeeze your shoulder blades together, and move your arms to the outside, stretching the band. Be sure to keep your elbows at your sides while you do this.
3. Relax.
4. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

## Resisted rows

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slide 6 of 6

For this exercise, you will need elastic exercise material, such as surgical tubing or Thera-Band.

1. Put the band around a solid object, such as a bedpost, at about waist level. Hold one end of the band in each hand.
2. With your elbows at your sides and bent to 90 degrees, pull the band back to move your shoulder blades toward each other. Return to the starting position.
3. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

**Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety.** Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

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