

04 Cervical Stabilization Exercises

The purpose of these exercises is to train the muscles whose job it is to protect your neck from injury. These exercises will progress in difficulty to increase the strength and endurance of these important muscles. Please follow the directions of your doctor or therapist carefully, and always try to maintain good posture.

EXERCISE 4.1 Cervical Brace

Get into the quadruped position, making certain your hips are directly above your knees and your shoulders are directly above your hands. Push your spine between your shoulder blades toward the ceiling without allowing your shoulders to elevate toward your ears. Maintain a normal curve in your low back. This is the neutral position (figure 1).

Move your head straight downward so that your chin pokes toward the floor (figure 2).

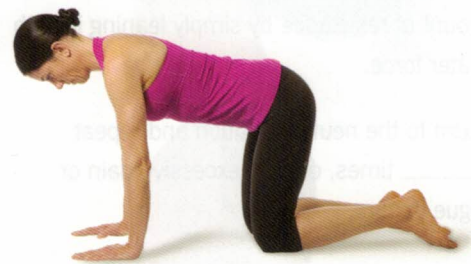


Figure 1



Figure 2

EXERCISE 4.1 Cervical Brace (continued)

Then, in a smooth scooping motion, tuck your chin down (figure 3), and draw your head back up to the neutral position (figure 4). This should not be done in steps, but rather as one smooth movement. You should feel a slight tension behind your throat and at the base of your neck. This is a cervical brace.

Hold this position for _____ seconds without allowing any of the following postural faults:

- Poking your chin
- Winging your shoulder blades
- Elevating your shoulders toward your ears
- Moving your lower back out of the neutral position

Repeat _____ times.

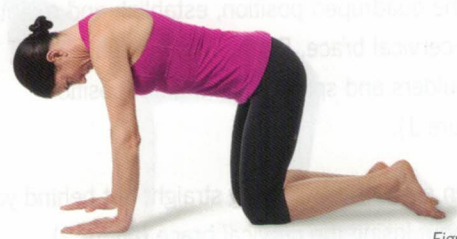


Figure 3



Figure 4

EXERCISE 4.2 Quadruped Single Arm Raise

In the quadruped position, establish and maintain the cervical brace. Be sure to keep your head, shoulders and spine in the neutral position (figure 1).

Then slowly raise one arm straight up without losing the cervical brace (figure 2).

Lower again and repeat with the opposite arm.

Repeat _____ times on each side.



Figure 1



Figure 2

EXERCISE 4.3 **Quadruped Single Leg Raise**

In the quadruped position, establish and maintain the cervical brace. Be sure to keep your head, shoulders and spine in the neutral position (figure 1).

Then slowly raise one leg straight out behind you without losing the cervical brace (figure 2).

Lower again and repeat with the opposite leg.

Repeat _____ times on each side.

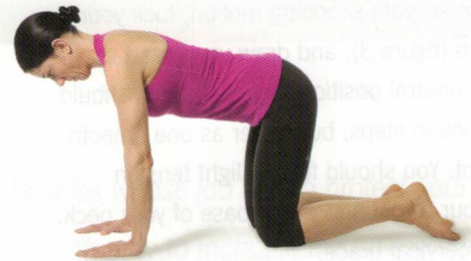


Figure 1



Figure 2

EXERCISE 4.4 **Quadruped Cross Crawl**

In the quadruped position, establish and maintain the cervical brace. Be sure to keep your head, shoulders and spine in the neutral position (figure 1).

Then slowly raise one arm straight up while at the same time raising your opposite leg straight out behind you (figure 2). Be sure not to lose the cervical brace and shoulder and spine alignment.

Lower and repeat with the other leg and arm.

Repeat _____ times on each side.

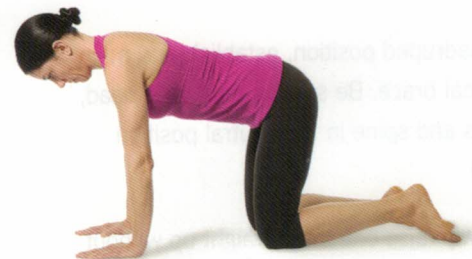


Figure 1



Figure 2

EXERCISE 4.5 **Quadruped Book Balance**

In the quadruped position, establish and maintain the cervical brace. Be sure to keep your head, shoulders and spine in the neutral position (figure 1).

Have a partner place a hardcover book on the back of your head (figure 2). The book should only contact the back of your head and should not rest on your upper back. Be sure not to lose the cervical brace and shoulder and spine alignment. Also be sure to keep the book balanced, with no part of the book resting on anything but the back of your head.

Hold this position for _____ seconds without allowing any of the following postural faults:

- Poking your chin
- Winging your shoulder blades
- Elevating your shoulders toward your ears
- Moving your lower back out of the neutral position

Repeat _____ times.



Figure 1

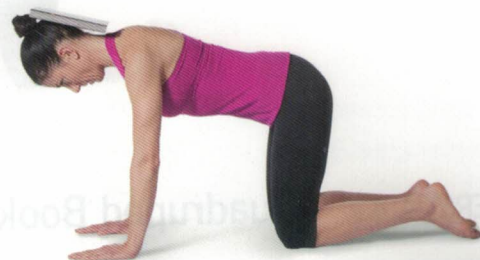


Figure 2

EXERCISE 4.6 **Quadruped Book Balance with Single Arm Raise**

In the quadruped position, establish and maintain the cervical brace and have a partner place a hardcover book on the back of your head. Be sure to keep your head, shoulders and spine in the neutral position, and maintain balance of the book (figure 1).

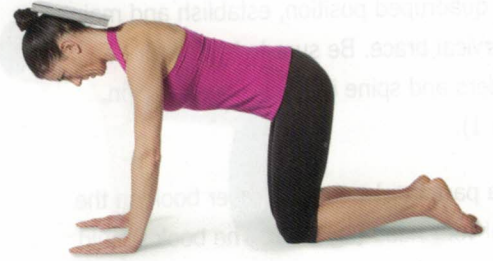


Figure 1

Then slowly raise one arm straight up without losing the cervical brace (figure 2).

Lower again and repeat with the opposite arm.

Repeat _____ times on each side.



Figure 2

EXERCISE 4.7 **Quadruped Book Balance with Single Leg Raise**

In the quadruped position, establish and maintain the cervical brace and have a partner place a hardcover book on the back of your head. Be sure to keep your head, shoulders and spine in the neutral position, and maintain balance of the book (figure 1).



Figure 1

Then slowly raise one leg straight out behind you without losing the cervical brace (figure 2).

Lower again and repeat with the opposite leg.

Repeat _____ times on each side.



Figure 2

EXERCISE 4.8 **Quadruped Book Balance with Cross Crawl**

In the quadruped position, establish and maintain the cervical brace and have a partner place a hardcover book on the back of your head. Be sure to keep your head, shoulders and spine in the neutral position (figure 1).

Then slowly raise one arm straight up while at the same time raising your opposite leg straight out behind you (figure 2). Be sure not to lose the cervical brace and shoulder and spine alignment, and maintain balance of the book.

Lower and repeat with the other leg and arm.

Repeat _____ times on each side.



Figure 1



Figure 2