

Neck and Shoulder Strengthening Exercises

Axial SpA (AS) commonly causes low back pain and sacroiliac joint pain, which can be difficult to manage. However, there are some things you can do to help relieve the pain and remain active.

Wall Press

1. Stand facing a wall with your feet about hip width apart
2. Place your palms against the wall, about shoulder height
3. Tense your abdomen slightly and keeping looking forward
4. Slowly bend your elbows to move your body towards the wall
5. Hold for one breath, then slowly push back to the start position
6. Repeat 6 times in total, up to 2 times daily.

Four Point Kneeling

1. Kneel on an exercise mat on all fours, so your hands are lined up under your shoulders and your knees are under your hips
2. Keep your neck neutral (not arching up or dropping down)
3. Gently tense your stomach muscles, then slowly lift one hand about 1cm off the mat, while maintaining your balance
4. Place your hand back down, then repeat with the other hand and each knee in turn

Repeat 2 times per limb in total, up to 2 times daily.

Advanced: To make this exercise stronger, once you lift your hand off the floor try to stretch your arm out in front of you. For your knee, try to stretch the leg out behind you. The emphasis is on keeping the movements slow and controlled.

Bicep Curls

1. Sit or stand comfortably with your arms relaxed by your sides and palms facing forwards
2. Keeping your elbows tucked close to your body, gently bend your elbows to bring your hands towards your upper arms
3. Slowly relax your arms back to the starting position
4. Repeat 6 times in total, up to 2 times a day. You can hold a light weight or tin to make this exercise stronger

Shoulder Shrugs

1. Stand comfortably with your arms relaxed by your sides
2. Gently shrug your shoulders up towards your ears as far as comfortable
3. Relax your shoulder back to the start position
4. Repeat 6 times in total, up to 2 times a day. You can hold a light weight or tin to make this exercise stronger

Arm Raises

1. Stand comfortably with your arms relaxed by your sides
2. Keeping your elbows straight, gently raise one or both arms out to the side, until your hand is level with your shoulder
3. Slowly relax your arm back down
4. Repeat 3 times in total, up to 2 times a day. You can hold a light weight or tin to make this exercise stronger

Arm Rows

1. Sit or stand comfortably, with your elbows bent to 90 degrees and your arms tucked in beside your body
2. Slowly pull your arms back, so your elbows move behind you (like you're rowing a boat)
3. Relax back to the start position
4. Repeat 6 times in total, up to 2 times a day. You can hold a light weight or tin to make this exercise stronger

