



Wrist – active range of movement exercises

This leaflet shows you how to gently stretch your wrist if you have arthritis. Start with the active movements and if these are stiffer than usual you can gently nudge into the stiffness using the passive stretches. These stretches may feel uncomfortable but should not be painful. These should be completed 1 x daily but can be repeated more if needed.

The exercises

- 1 a) With forearm supported, bend the wrist forwards as far as possible and then extend the wrist backwards as far as possible. Keep your fingers relaxed so they fall forwards when the wrist bends forward and curl into a hook when the wrist comes backwards. Make sure the forearm and elbow do not lift up. Repeat x 10.



- 1 b) If the wrist is very stiff or painful start with the forearm and hand supported on a table and move the wrist backwards and forwards. This eliminates working against gravity.



- 1 c) Alternatively, start with your hand flat on your thigh and slide your hand over your knee so the wrist bends forward, return to start position and then gently lift the hand backwards.
- 2 Keeping your elbows tucked into your body, turn your palm upwards and then downwards.



- 3 Relax your hand on the table, curl the fingers into a loose fist. Slowly move your wrist to the right (towards the little finger side).



Passive range of movement wrist exercises

Nudge into the stiffness using these exercises.

- 1 Place your hands flat on the table. Raise your elbow to increase the extension stretch at the back of your wrist. Hold the stretch for 5 seconds. Relax. Repeat x 10.
Alternatively, place the palms together. Slowly raise your elbows so you feel the stretch in the wrist. Hold for 5 seconds. Relax. Repeat x 10 going as far into the stretch as you can without pain.



- 2 Rest your forearm on a table, let the hand flop over the edge. Apply a gentle pressure to the back of your hand to increase the bend at your wrist. Hold for 5 secs. Relax.
Repeat x _____.



- 3 Keeping the elbow tucked into your body, gently hold your forearm with your other hand and slowly turn your hand over so that your palm is facing upwards. Hold for 5 seconds. Relax. Repeat x _____.



- 4 Place your hand flat on the table, palm facing downwards. Keep your hand still, slowly move your elbow out to the side. Hold the stretch for 5 seconds. Relax. Repeat x 10.



Contacting us

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Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

RBFT Rheumatology Therapies, January 2024. Next review due: January 2026