

Stretching and Strengthening for the Overhead Athlete Home Exercises

Stretching

All stretches should be completed as 3 sets of 30 seconds, unless otherwise instructed. Upper extremity stretching should be completed 2-3 times per day. These stretches should be performed on both upper extremities following a good warm-up.

Cross Arm Stretch

Extend your arm straight out in front of you and then cross your body towards the opposite shoulder. Use your opposite arm to hook under the cross body arm and pull it closer to your chest. This stretch should be felt in the shoulder.



Triceps Stretch

Raise your arm up above your head, and allow your elbow to fully bend letting your hand reach down between your shoulder blades. Use your other hand to grab hold of your elbow and apply backwards pressure to increase the stretch. This stretch should be felt along your triceps (back of your upper arm).



Latissimus Stretch

Raise your arm straight up above your head. Grab that wrist with your opposite hand and lean in the direction of the opposite arm. This stretch should be felt along the side of your body with the raised arm.



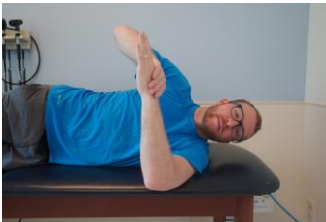
Doorway Stretch

Standing in a doorway raise your arms up to the side at shoulder height, and then bend your elbows to 90 degrees. Place your forearms along the front of the doorway and lunge your body forward. The stretch should be felt throughout the chest and into the front of the shoulders.



Sleeper Stretch

Start by laying on your side with both arms out in front of your body. Hold out the arm of the side you are laying in front of you with the elbow bent to 90 degrees and the palm open. Then use your other hand to slowly apply pressure in a downward motion so that the open palm is traveling towards the ground. This stretch should be felt along the back and shoulder of the bent arm.



Forearm Stretch

Holding an arm straight out in front of you, grab the base of your fingers with your other hand. Slowly pull your fingers and wrist towards yourself until a stretch is felt down the forearm and through the wrist.



Towel Stretch

Holding one end of a towel in one hand, reach up and bend your elbow allowing the towel to drape down your back. With your other hand, reach down behind your back and grab hold of the other end of the towel. Inch your hands along the towel closer to one another until a stretch is felt through the shoulders. Repeat with the arms in the opposite placement.



Neck and Trap Stretch

Reach your hand over your head and grab hold of the opposing side. Gently tilt your head towards this direction and apply a small amount of force with your hand. Continue to tilt until a stretch is felt along the opposite side of the neck.



Strengthening:

All exercises should be completed as 3 sets of 10 repetitions, unless otherwise instructed. Upper extremity strengthening exercises should be completed 1-2 per day, about 5 times per week. These exercises should be performed on both sides following a good warm-up.

T's, Y's and I's (perform as 3 sets of 20-30 seconds)

T's – Laying on your stomach, spread your arms out straight at shoulder height with your thumbs pointing towards the floor. Squeeze your shoulder blades together, and pulse your arms up and down.

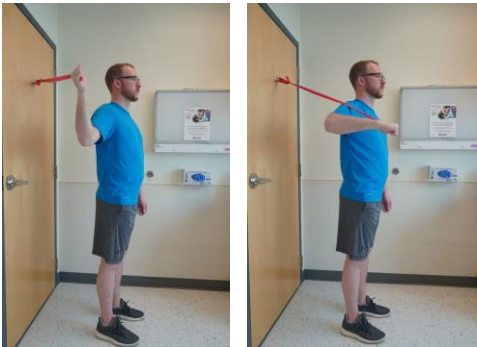
Y's – Laying on your stomach, spread your arms out angled above your head creating the shape of a “Y” with your palms towards the floor. Squeeze your shoulder blades together, and pulse your arms up and down.

I's – Laying on your stomach, raise your arms out straight above your head with your palms towards the floor. Squeeze your shoulder blades together, and pulse your arms up and down.



Abduction Internal Rotation

Starting with the arm out to the side at shoulder height, with the elbow bent to a 90° angle and the hand raised up by the ear; grip the resistance band. Rotate your arm forwards bringing the palm towards the floor, feeling the resistance coming from behind the arm. Hold momentarily, then allow your arm to rotate backwards to start. Be sure to squeeze your shoulder blade throughout the motion.



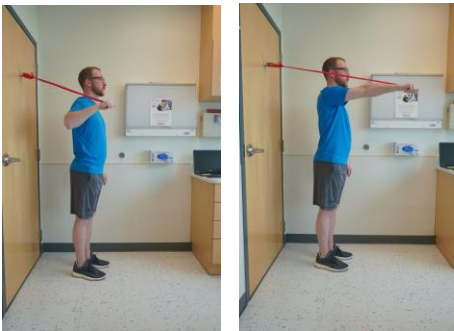
Abducted External Rotation

Starting with the arm out to the side at shoulder height, with the elbow bent to a 90° angle and the palm facing the floor; grip the resistance band. Rotate your arm backwards to lift the palm facing forward while feeling the resistance coming from in front of you. Hold momentarily, then allow your arm to rotate forward back to start. Be sure to squeeze your shoulder blade throughout the motion.



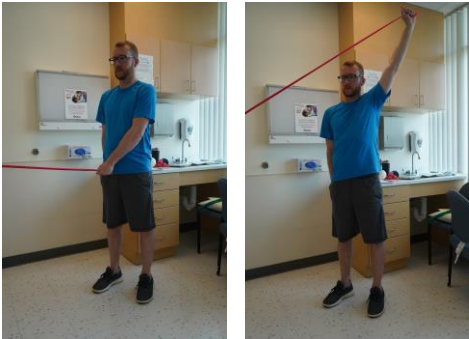
Punches

Start with your elbows bent and your hands up by your shoulders. The resistance bands should be coming from behind you. Punch forward and up in a slow and controlled manner while squeezing your shoulder blades together. Hold momentarily and then allow your arms to return to the start position.



Wind Up

Hold the resistance band with one hand at the opposite hip. Then diagonally rise this hand up to the same shoulder; keeping your elbow straight. The resistance should be coming from below and across your body. Hold at the top for a moment, then slowly return to start position.



Reverse Throw

Holding the resistance band above your head with the resistance coming from behind you, pull down diagonally across your body to the opposite hip. Hold at your hip for a moment, then slowly return to the start position.



Push Ups and Plus

Starting on all fours with palms and knees firm planted on the floor, lower your chest towards the floor. Allow your elbows to bend, keeping them near the trunk of the body. Lower as close to the floor as comfortable, and then slowly raise yourself back up to starting position. Once back at the starting position, push through your shoulders and arms allowing your shoulder blades to expand upwards and round out (this is the “plus”); then return to start.

To advance this exercise, perform in a traditional push-up position with palms and feet planted on the floor and legs straight.

