

STRENGTHENING EXERCISES

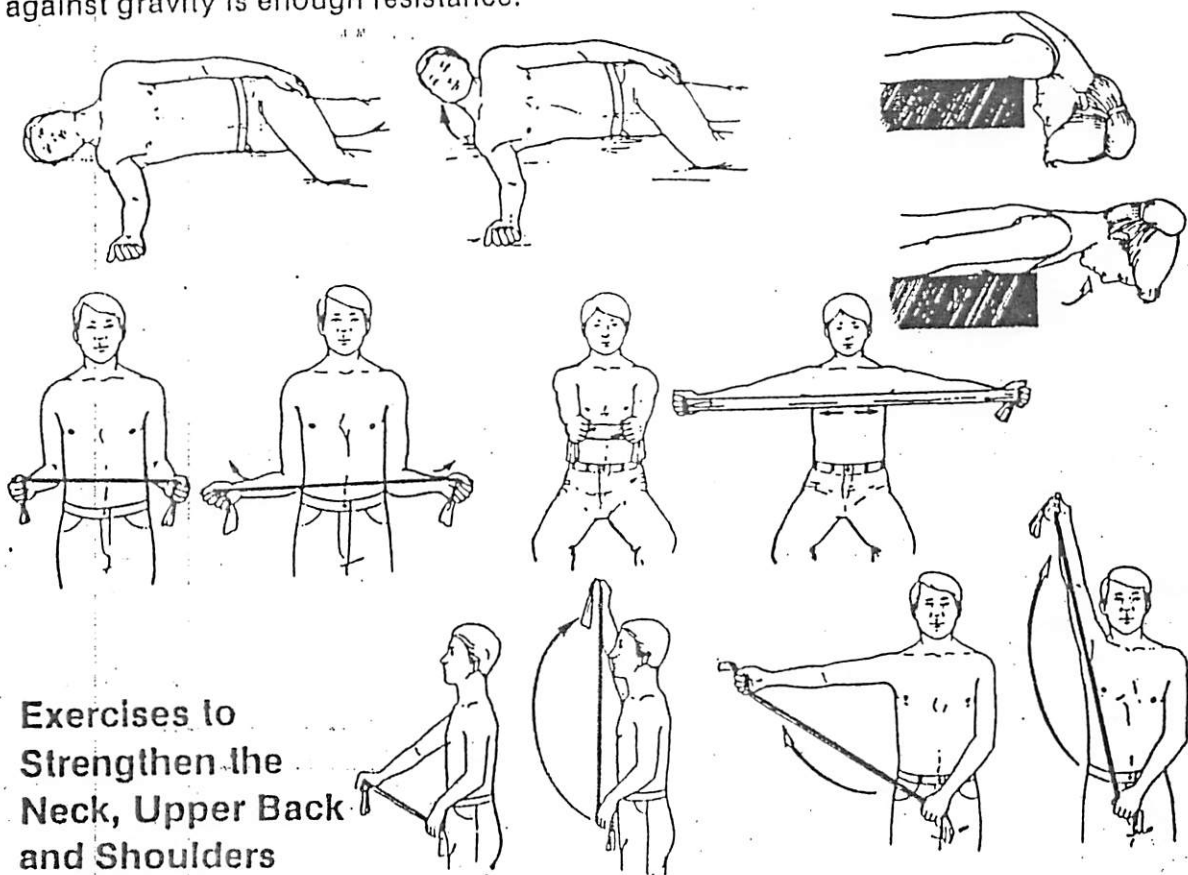
To maintain good posture and have a healthy back you must have good, well balanced muscular strength.

For strengthening exercises to be effective, the muscles must become fatigued while exercising. This increased work load causes the muscle to grow stronger. If your muscles are weak, only mild exercise will be needed to fatigue the muscle. As you grow stronger, more repetition or resistance must be added to work the muscle enough to make it grow even stronger.

Generally speaking, exercises utilizing heavy resistance and fewer repetitions build power, or muscle bulk, while exercising with mild resistance and greater repetitions build endurance.

Power is needed for heavy work activities and certain sports. Endurance is more important for good posture and most of our everyday working and living activities.

Resistance may be added to most exercises in the form of free weights, exercise machines or elastic stretch material such as rubber tubing. Sometimes just working against gravity is enough resistance.



Exercises to Strengthen the Neck, Upper Back and Shoulders

Chronic forward head posture, slumped sitting and round shoulders can cause stress on the joints and muscles in the upper back and neck. It is important to strengthen the neck and upper back muscles to correct this postural problem.

Strengthening exercises for forward head, slumped sitting and round shoulder posture and/or weakness of the muscles in the neck, upper back and shoulders are shown above. These exercises should be done once or twice daily, starting with a few of each and gradually increasing the number as tolerated. The back strengthening exercises shown on page 46 will also benefit.