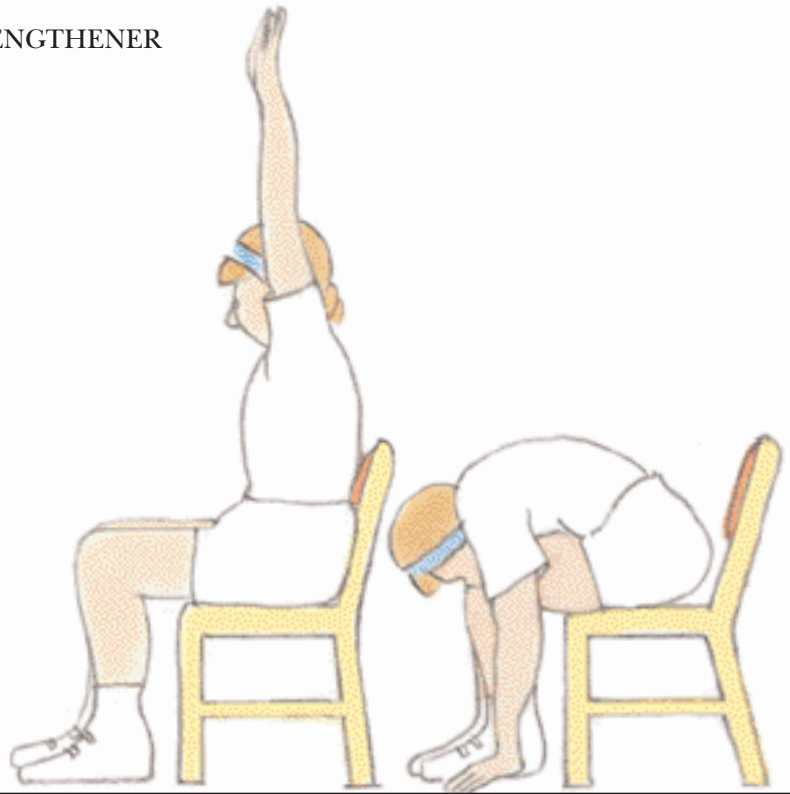


## UPPER BACK, ARM, AND NECK STRENGTHENER

This exercise will help you improve your posture, feel more in control of your balance, and present a more assertive image. Because it places the head below the level of the heart, however, it may not be appropriate for people with retinopathy.

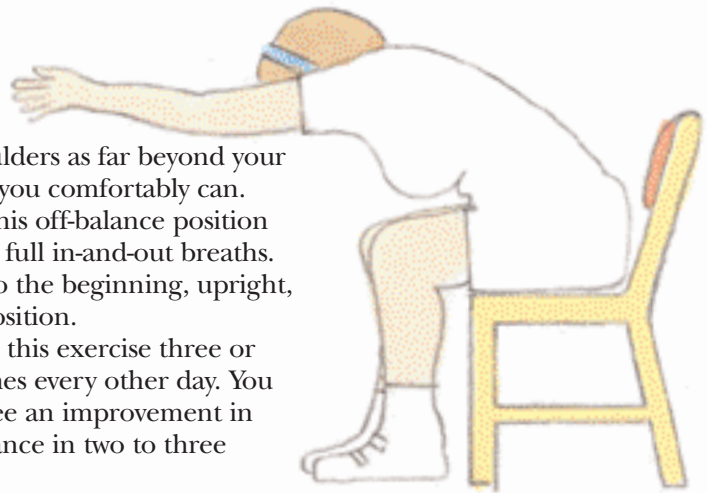
- Sit squarely on your chair. Visualize and try to position your ears directly over your shoulders, shoulders over hips, and thighs firmly on the chair seat. Your shins should be perpendicular to the floor. As you do this exercise, focus on your balance and the sensations you feel in your arms, legs, torso, and feet.
- Raise both arms straight overhead so they are pointing to the ceiling. With your mouth closed, breathe in deeply through your



nose. Exhale through your nose and bend forward, hinging at your hips, until your torso is resting on your thighs; allow your arms to drop toward the floor. Relax your neck, and lower your head.

- Inhale, raising your arms alongside your ears and elevating your head slightly until your face and arms are parallel with the floor. Raise your torso up one or two inches off your thighs. Visualize and hold your spine as straight as possible. Stretch your head, arms,

- and shoulders as far beyond your knees as you comfortably can.
- Hold this off-balance position for three full in-and-out breaths. Return to the beginning, upright, seated position.
- Repeat this exercise three or more times every other day. You should see an improvement in your balance in two to three months.



## LOWER TORSO STRENGTHENER

This exercise is for people who have control of the muscles in their abdomen, pelvis, and buttocks.

- Sit as tall and straight as possible. Using your abdominal muscles, pull your navel toward your spine until you feel the middle of your back straighten toward the chair back. You may need to tilt your pelvis forward to get your back to straighten. Tighten your abdomen and buttocks. Hold this position

- for up to six seconds. Release and relax. Repeat five more times for a total of six. It may take several practice sessions to engage all of the muscles in the area or to keep them contracted for six seconds.





### ABDOMEN AND THIGH STRENGTHENER 1

This exercise requires the ability to lift your thighs.

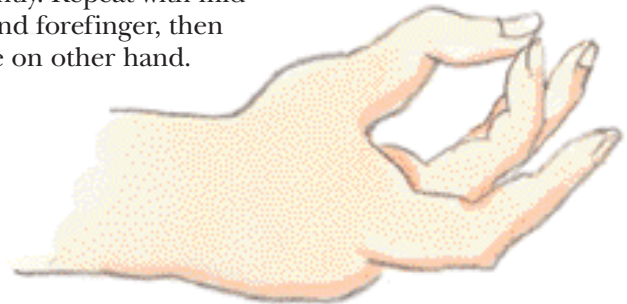
■ Sitting erect, lift your right thigh toward your chest using only your thigh and abdominal muscles. Do not assist with your hands. Hold

your thigh off the seat for up to six seconds. Repeat five more times, then switch to the left leg. It may require several sessions before you can repeat or hold this position while counting to six.

### FINGER STRENGTHENER

■ Make a circle with your little finger and thumb. Press the end of the finger and the end of the thumb tightly together to strengthen the finger muscles. Then make a circle with your ring finger and thumb, pressing them

together tightly. Repeat with middle finger and forefinger, then do the same on other hand.



### ABDOMEN AND THIGH STRENGTHENER 2

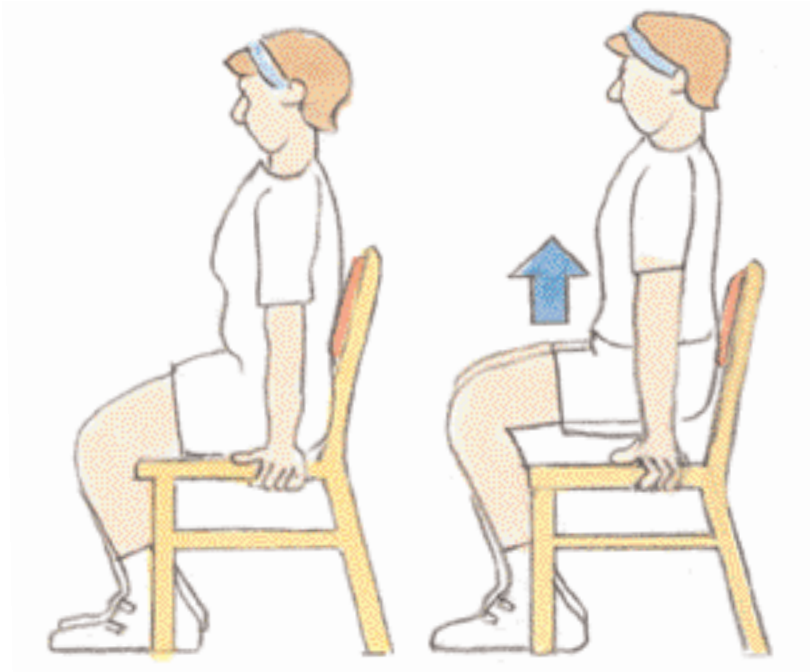
Choose this method if your abdomen protrudes over your thighs.

■ Sit erect. Press down firmly with the sole of your right foot onto the floor or a footrest. Continue pressing and hold for a count of six.

■ Alternatively, extend your right leg so the knee is straight. Press forward firmly with the sole of your right foot against a wall or other stationary object. Hold for a count of six. Release and relax.

■ Repeat either exercise a total of six times with the right leg, then repeat with the left leg. It may require several sessions to develop the ability to do the exercise six times or to hold it for six counts.





### UPPER ARM STRENGTHENER

This exercise makes transferring to and from a wheelchair easier; it can also make lifting objects easier. Practice this on a firm seat, not on a soft cushion.

■ Place your right hand on the edge of the seat beside your right thigh, palm down, fingers pointed toward floor, and left hand beside your left thigh, palm down, fingers pointed toward floor. Push down with the heels of your hands to lift yourself slightly off the seat. Hold for up to six seconds. Release and relax. Repeat five more times for a total of six times. It may take several sessions to gain sufficient strength to repeat or to get to a six-second count.

### SHOULDER FLEXIBILITY

■ While seated, place your right hand on your left knee and your left hand on your right knee. (Alternatively, place your hands on the forward ends of opposite chair arms.)

■ Open both arms out to your sides just above the chair arms.

■ Bringing your arms up to shoulder level, cross extended arms in front of you.

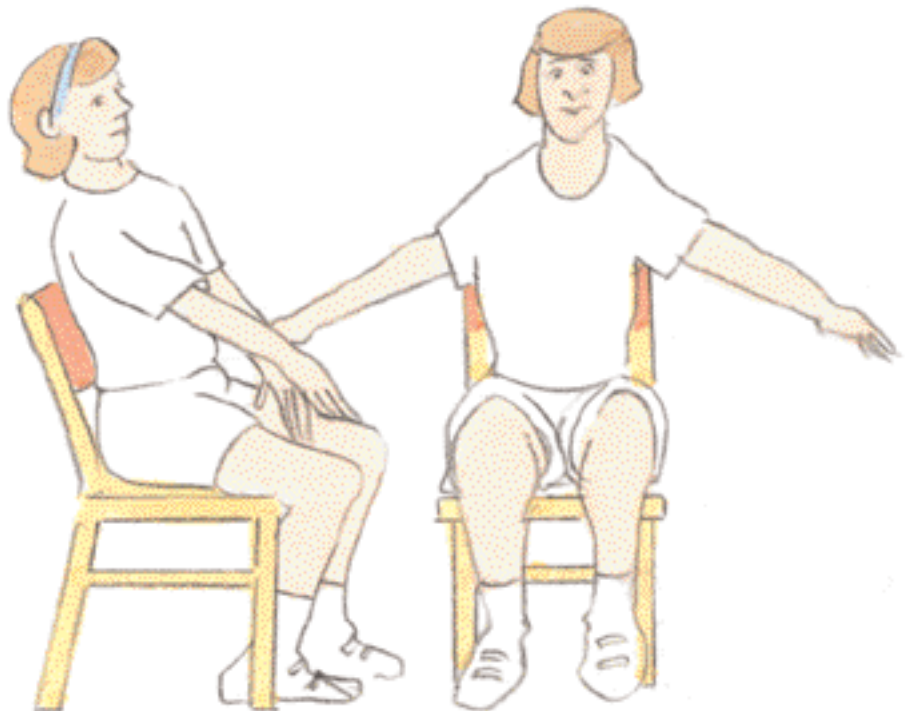
■ Open your arms out to sides again, this time above shoulder level.

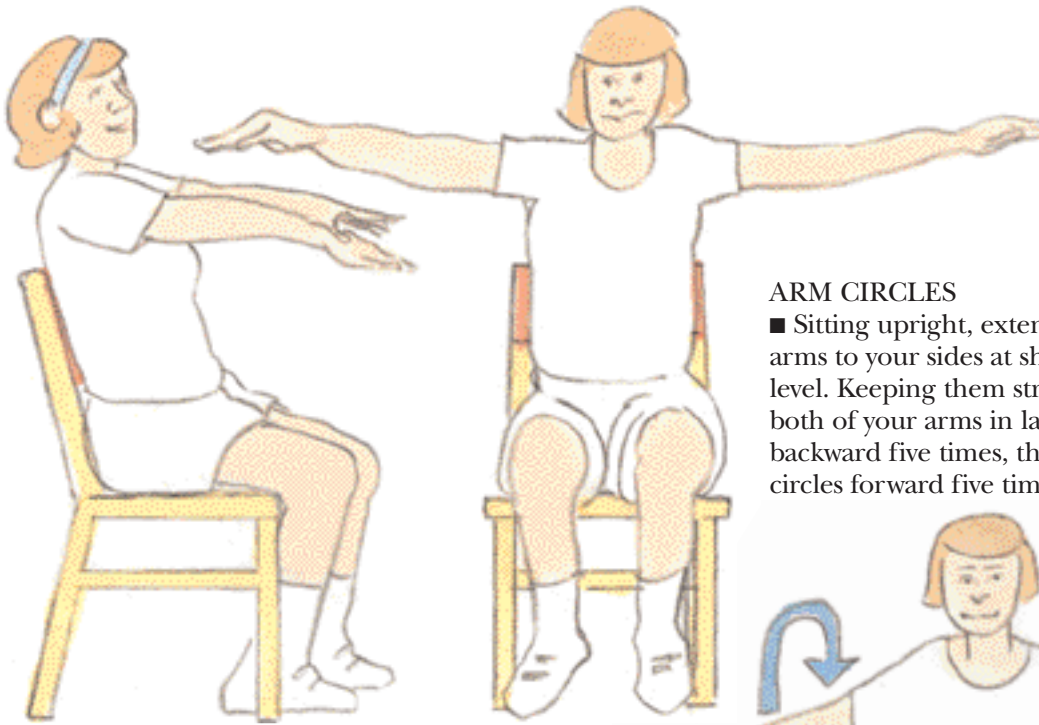
■ Cross your extended arms again in front of you at shoulder level.

■ Open your arms again out to sides just above the chair arms.

■ Return to beginning position, with hands on opposite knees or chair arms.

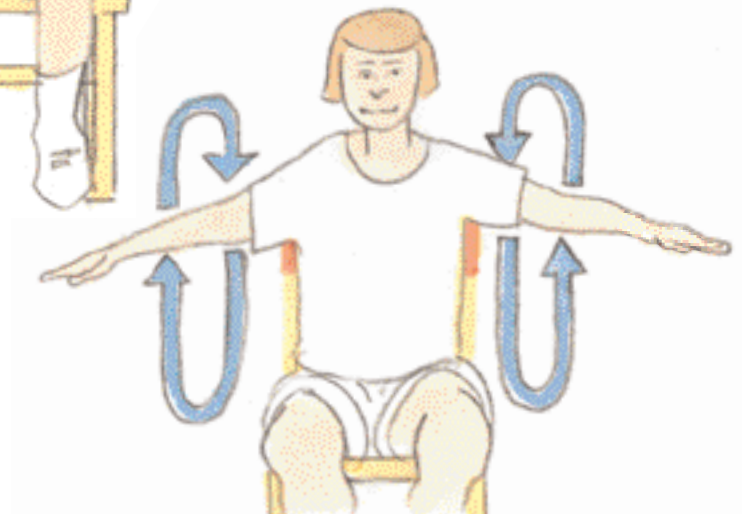
■ Repeat this series of movements for a total of six times.





### ARM CIRCLES

■ Sitting upright, extend your arms to your sides at shoulder level. Keeping them straight, move both of your arms in large circles backward five times, then in large circles forward five times.

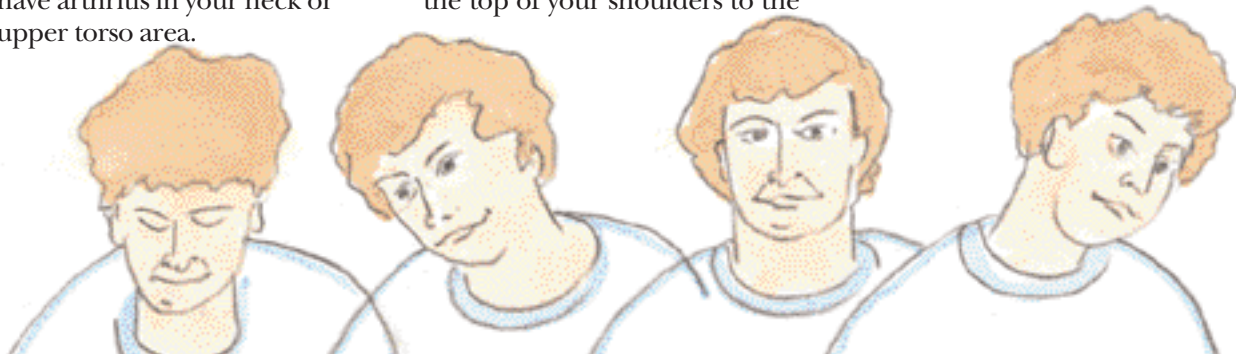


### NECK ROLLS 1

Neck flexibility makes looking around easier and can improve spatial awareness. Choose this version if you have an able spinal cord and cervical vertebrae but have arthritis in your neck or upper torso area.

■ Sitting erect, drop your chin to your chest. Roll your right ear toward your right shoulder, keeping your face forward; your ear should not actually touch your shoulder. Roll your head over the top of your shoulders to the

left side, stretching your left ear toward your left shoulder. Roll your head back to the beginning position, with chin to chest. Repeat once. Reverse direction and perform twice.



## NECK ROLLS 2

Choose this method of head rolls if you do not have arthritis in your neck or upper torso area and you desire shampoos at a standard hairdresser's shampoo bowl.

- Drop your chin to your chest.

Roll your right ear toward your right shoulder keeping your face forward (but don't touch your ear to your shoulder). Keeping your head supported by your neck muscles, roll your head back until your chin is pointed toward ceiling. Do not let the

head flop back unsupported. Continue the neck roll to the left, so your left ear is facing but not touching your left shoulder. Roll head to center, beginning position. Repeat once. Reverse direction. Perform twice in this direction.



## WRIST FLEXER AND STRENGTHENER

■ Rest your forearms, palms down, on your thighs or chair arms; your hands should be extended beyond the ends of your knees or the arms of the chair. Curl your hands into a loose fist. Raise your hands, bending only at the wrists; keep forearms in resting position. Relax wrists, returning fists to level position. Repeat 5 more times.

■ Turn arms over so palms are facing up. Curl your hands into loose fists. Raise your hands, bending only at the wrists. Return hands to level position. Repeat 5 more times.

