

Thoracic Towel Exercise

You will need a hand towel rolled up longitudinally. (You want it long and thin, not short and thick.)

**** Each time you perform this exercise, place the towel under a new location of your upper-mid back.****

1. Place the towel perpendicular to your spine on a firm surface (such as the floor).
2. Lie on your back and move the towel so that it is underneath your ribs (upper-mid back).
3. Bend your knees 90 degrees, keeping your knees pointing upwards, while keeping your feet planted on the floor, with the toes turned in, pointing toward each other.
4. While lying on your back with your arms next to your hips, turn your hands out (supinate, palms toward the ceiling), as far as they can go.
5. Initiate a slow deep breath lasting 5-6 seconds by first pushing out your abdomen (belly) and only during the last third of the movement allow your chest to rise. (Inhale until you feel you cannot take in any more air.)
6. Hold the breath for 5-6 seconds.
7. Exhale slowly over 5-6 seconds until you reach a maximal exhalation. During exhalation, relax and allow gravity to “wrap your body around the towel.”
8. Next, turn your hands in maximally (pronate, palms toward the floor) as far as they can go.
9. Repeat abdominal breathing (steps 5-7).
10. Repeat this sequence ~3 times.
11. Now slowly move your arms along the floor, away from your sides (abduct) until you note a subtle resistance or pull.*
12. Repeat the same sequence of maximal breathing and maximal internal and external rotation of the arms outlined in steps 1-10, at least twice.
13. Return your arms to your sides.
14. Again, slowly move your arms along the floor until you feel new resistance.
15. Repeat the same sequence of maximal breathing and maximal internal and external rotation of the arms outlined in steps 1-10, at least twice.
16. Return your arms to your sides.
17. Continue with the exercise until no more resistance is felt or until a max of 10 minutes is reached.

*If you are unable to sense this, at least perform the exercise at set intervals of 45, 90, 135, and 180 degrees.