

Self-Range of Motion Exercises for the Arm and Hand

After a stroke, it is important to do the exercises in this handout for your affected arm and hand. You can do them on your own by using your unaffected arm and hand. These gentle movements are called “self-range of motion” exercises, and they help to maintain your movement, prevent stiffness, improve blood flow, and increase awareness of your affected arm and hand.

Complete the exercises slowly and do not force movements.



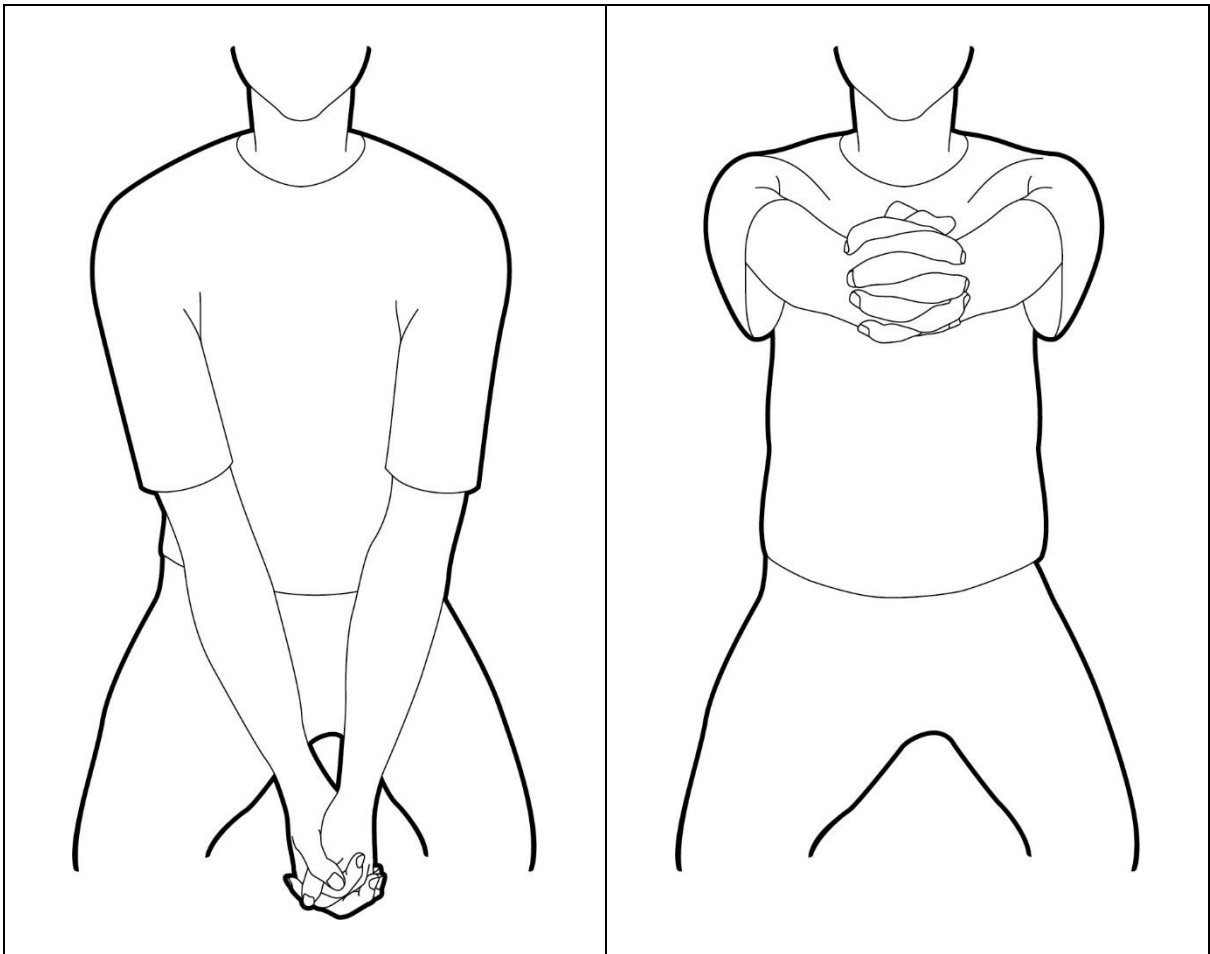
Stop if you feel pain.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your Occupational Therapist: _____

Do the exercises in this handout _____ times each day.

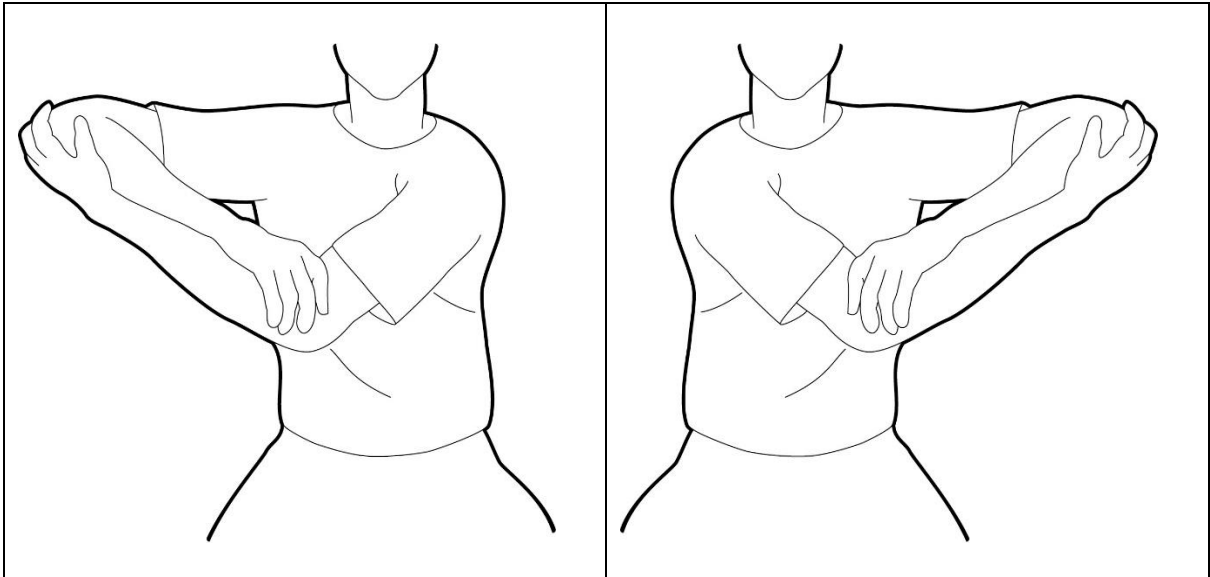
1. Shoulder: Forward Arm Lift

- Interlock your fingers, or hold your wrist.
- With your elbows straight and thumbs facing the ceiling, lift your arms to shoulder height.
- Slowly lower your arms to starting position.
- Hold for ____ seconds.
- Repeat ____ times.



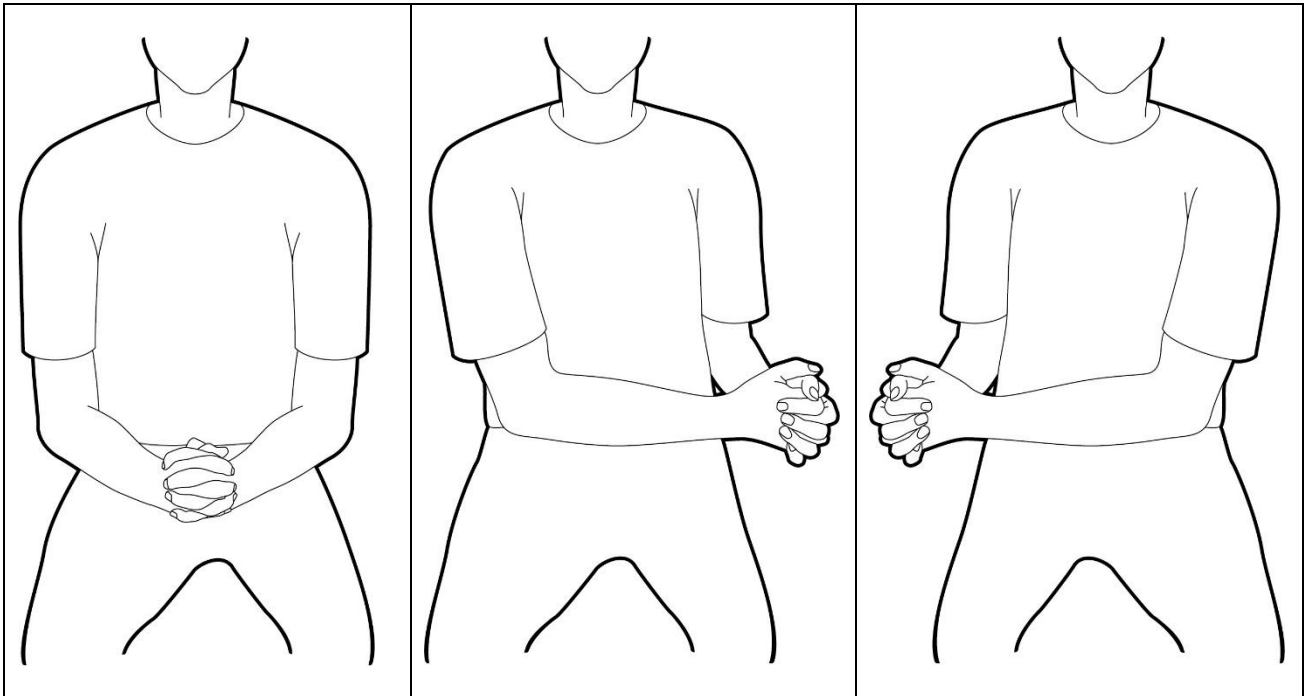
2. Shoulder: “Rock the Baby” Stretch

- Hold your affected arm by supporting the elbow, forearm and wrist (as if cradling a baby).
- Slowly move your arms to the side, away from your body, lifting to shoulder height. Repeat this motion in the other direction.
- Slowly rock your arms side-to-side, and keep your body from turning.
- Repeat _____ times.



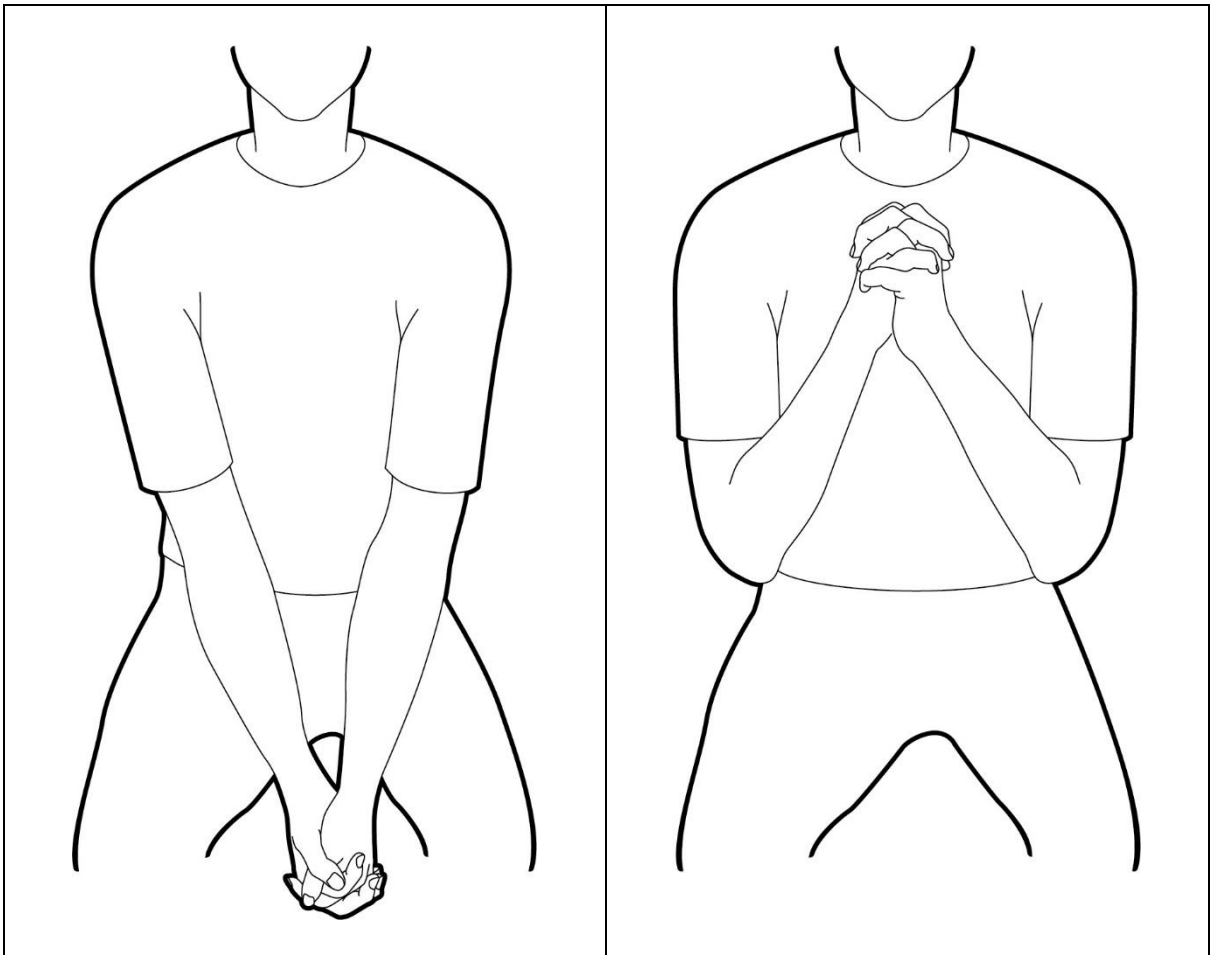
3. Shoulder: Rotation Stretch

- Interlock your fingers, or hold your wrist.
- With your elbows bent at 90 degrees, keep your affected arm at your side.
- Slowly guide your affected arm across your stomach.
- Hold for ____ seconds.
- Slowly guide your forearm away from your body, keeping your elbow at your side.
- Hold for ____ seconds.
- Repeat ____ times.



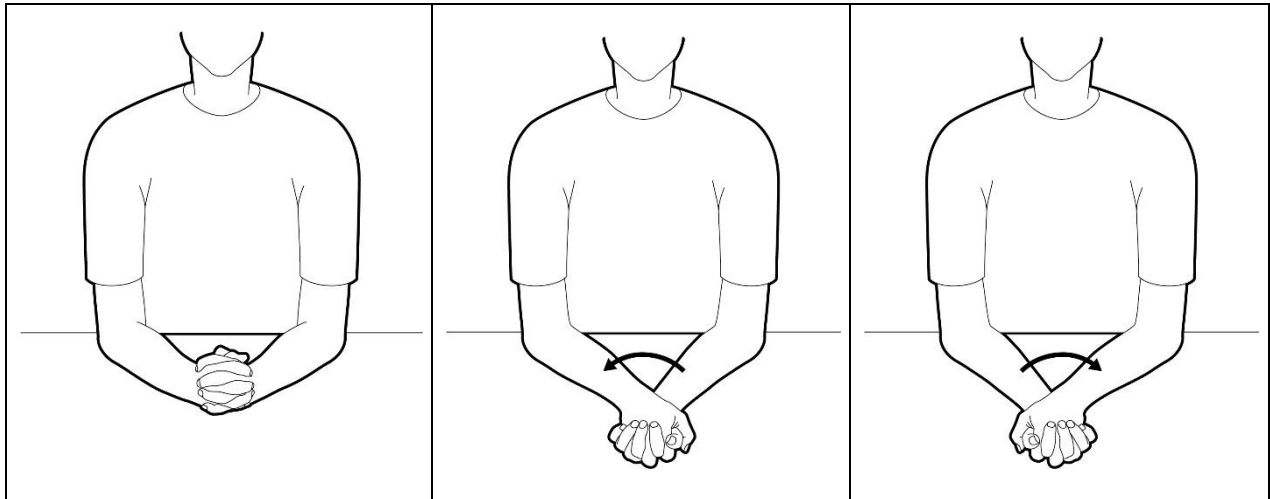
4. Elbow Stretch

- Interlock your fingers, or hold your wrist.
- Start with your arms straight.
- Slowly bend your elbows.
- Hold for ____ seconds.
- Slowly return to starting position, with elbows straight.
- Repeat ____ times.



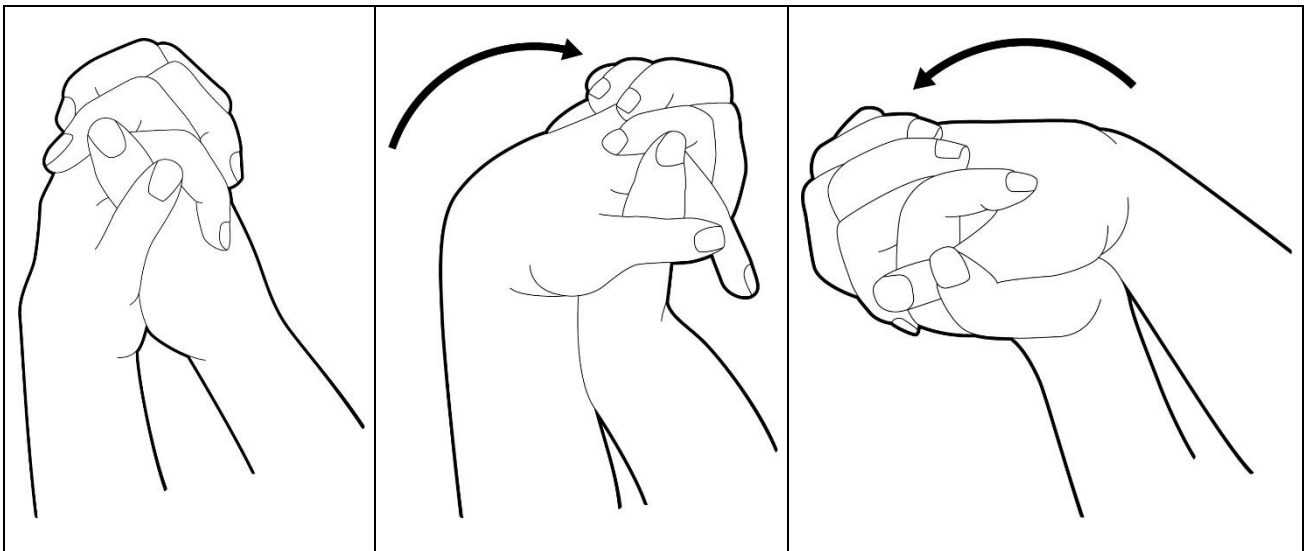
5. Forearm Stretch

- Interlock your fingers, or clasp your hands together.
- Place your affected hand on your lap or supported on a table.
- Rotate your hands so the palm of your affected hand is facing downwards.
- Hold for ____ seconds.
- Rotate your hands so the palm of your affected hand is facing upwards.
- Hold for ____ seconds.
- Repeat ____ times.



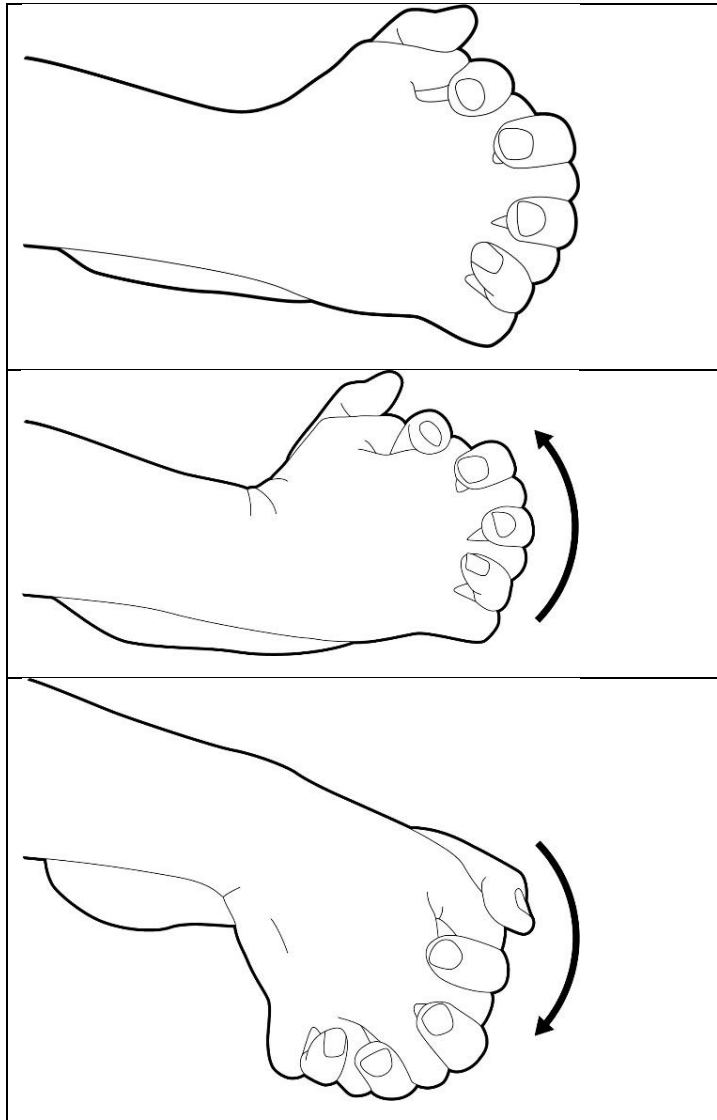
6. Wrist: Side-to-Side Stretch

- Interlock your fingers, or clasp your hands together.
- Slowly bend your wrist to the left, then to the right.
- Hold for ____ seconds.
- Repeat ____ times each direction.



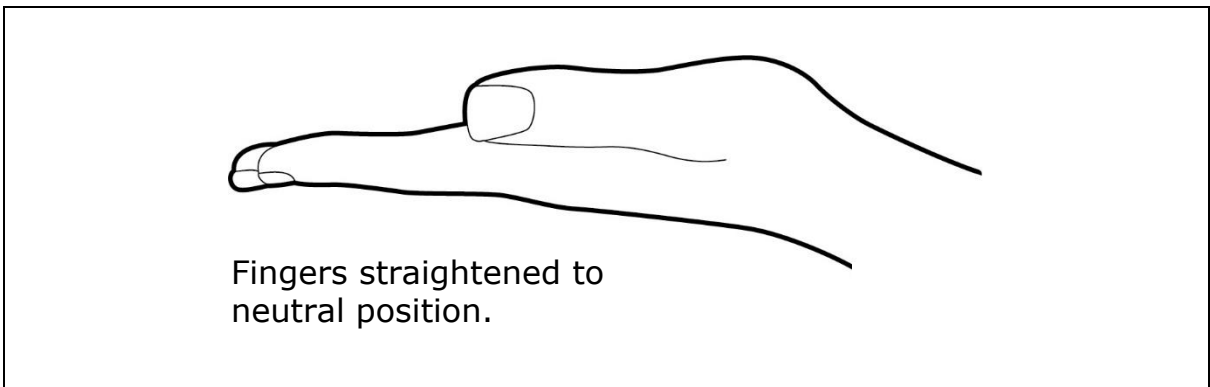
7. Wrist: Forwards and Backwards Stretch

- Interlock your fingers, or clasp your hands together.
- Place your hand on your lap or supported on a table.
- Slowly bend your wrist towards you, then away from you.
- Hold for ____ seconds.
- Repeat ____ times each direction.



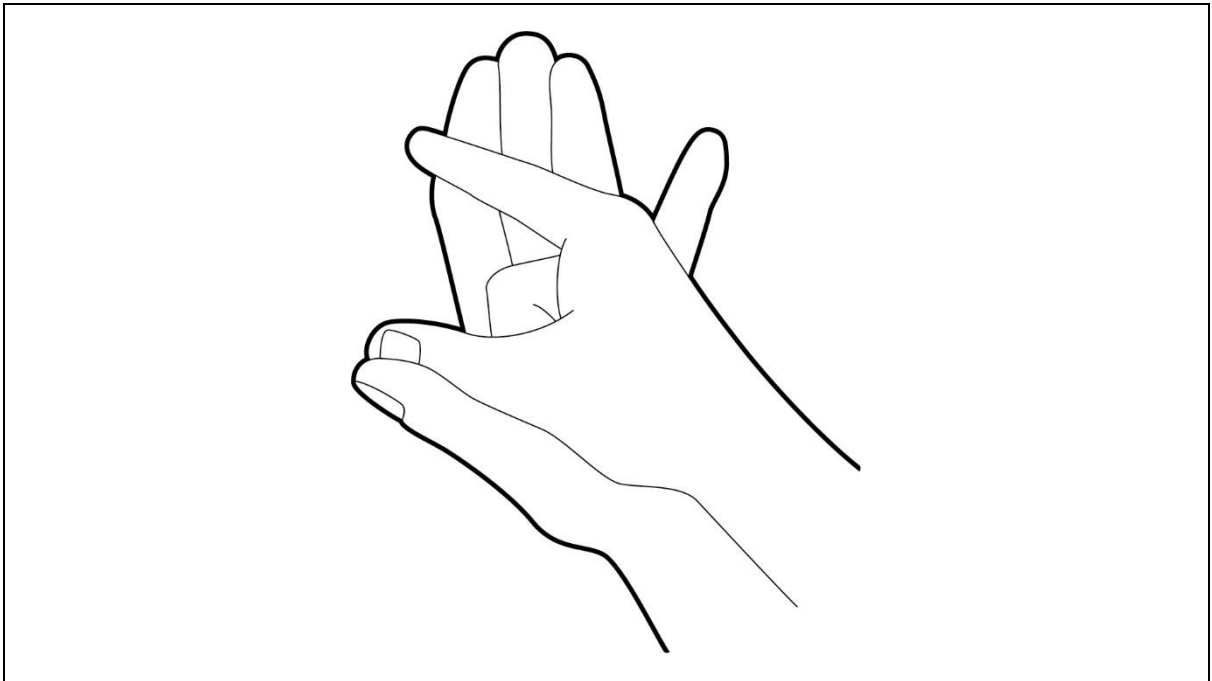
8. Fingers: Bending and Straightening

- Place your affected hand on your lap or supported on a table.
- Individually bend and straighten each finger.
- When straightening fingers, do not bend fingers backwards. Only straighten to a neutral position as if your hand was resting flat on a table.
- Repeat _____ times each finger.



9. Thumb and Index Finger Stretch

- Place your affected hand on your lap or supported on a table.
- Place the thumb and index finger of your non-affected hand, between the thumb and index finger of your affected hand.
- Stretch the thumb and index finger apart.
- Hold for ____ seconds.
- Repeat ____ times.



10. Thumb and Pinky Finger Stretch

- Place your affected hand on your lap or supported on a table.
- Move your affected thumb so it touches the tip of your little finger.
- Hold for ____ seconds.
- Repeat ____ times.

