

# mckenzie neck exercises

**mckenzie neck exercises** are a specialized set of movements designed to alleviate neck pain, improve posture, and restore mobility by targeting spinal alignment and disc health. Originating from the McKenzie Method, these exercises focus on self-treatment techniques that empower individuals to manage cervical spine conditions such as herniated discs, neck stiffness, and chronic pain. Incorporating McKenzie neck exercises into a rehabilitation routine can reduce the need for invasive procedures and promote faster recovery. This article explores the principles behind the McKenzie Method, outlines effective exercises, and offers guidance on performing them safely. Additionally, it discusses the benefits, precautions, and professional recommendations to optimize outcomes with these therapeutic movements. Following this, a comprehensive overview of the key elements provides a structured approach to understanding and implementing McKenzie neck exercises.

- Understanding the McKenzie Method
- Key McKenzie Neck Exercises
- Benefits of McKenzie Neck Exercises
- Precautions and Safety Tips
- Incorporating McKenzie Exercises into Daily Routine

## Understanding the McKenzie Method

The McKenzie Method, also known as Mechanical Diagnosis and Therapy (MDT), is a globally recognized approach to managing spinal disorders, particularly those affecting the neck and back. Developed by physiotherapist Robin McKenzie, this method emphasizes patient education, self-assessment, and specific exercises aimed at centralizing pain and restoring function. The approach is grounded in the principle that certain repetitive movements and postures can influence the position of spinal discs and reduce nerve compression.

## Principles of the McKenzie Method

At the core of the McKenzie Method is the identification of directional preference, which means determining which movements alleviate symptoms or centralize pain. This process guides the selection of targeted exercises to correct postural imbalances and disc displacement. The method encourages patients to actively participate in their recovery through daily exercise regimens, minimizing dependence on passive treatments like medications or manual therapy.

## Application to Neck Pain

In cases of cervical spine issues, McKenzie neck exercises focus on reducing radicular symptoms,

such as pain radiating into the shoulders or arms, by promoting proper spinal alignment. The approach is particularly beneficial for disc-related problems, muscle tightness, and joint dysfunction. By promoting extension movements and postural correction, the exercises help decompress nerve roots and improve overall neck function.

## Key McKenzie Neck Exercises

McKenzie neck exercises are designed to be simple, repeatable, and effective in targeting the cervical spine's mobility and alignment. These exercises typically involve controlled movements in extension, flexion, and lateral directions to encourage disc rehydration and reduce nerve irritation. Below are some of the most commonly prescribed McKenzie exercises for neck rehabilitation.

### Neck Retraction

Neck retraction is a fundamental McKenzie exercise that helps correct forward head posture and relieve cervical disc pressure. This movement involves pulling the chin straight back while keeping the head level, creating a "double chin" effect.

1. Sit or stand with a neutral spine.
2. Slowly draw the chin backward without tilting the head up or down.
3. Hold the position for 5 seconds.
4. Repeat 10-15 times, performing 3 sets daily.

### Neck Extension

This exercise extends the cervical spine and assists in centralizing disc material away from nerve roots. It is often performed after establishing comfort with neck retraction.

1. Start in a sitting position with good posture.
2. From the retracted position, gently tilt the head backward to look up toward the ceiling.
3. Hold for 5 seconds, then return to neutral.
4. Perform 10-12 repetitions, 2-3 times per day.

## **Lateral Neck Movements**

Lateral movements involve side bending the neck to each side to improve flexibility and reduce stiffness. These should be performed cautiously to avoid aggravating symptoms.

1. Sit upright with shoulders relaxed.
2. Slowly tilt the head to one side, bringing the ear toward the shoulder.
3. Hold for 5 seconds and return to center.
4. Repeat on the opposite side.
5. Complete 10 repetitions per side.

## **Benefits of McKenzie Neck Exercises**

McKenzie neck exercises offer multiple therapeutic advantages for individuals experiencing cervical spine discomfort. These benefits have been supported by clinical research and practical application in physical therapy settings.

## **Pain Relief and Symptom Management**

Through targeted movements, McKenzie exercises help centralize pain symptoms, reducing the spread of discomfort from the neck into the shoulders and arms. This centralization is a key indicator of positive treatment response and contributes to lasting pain relief.

## **Improved Neck Mobility**

Regular performance of these exercises enhances the range of motion in the cervical spine by loosening tight muscles and joints. This increased mobility supports daily activities and reduces the risk of chronic stiffness.

## **Postural Correction**

The emphasis on neck retraction and extension promotes proper spinal alignment, counteracting the common effects of poor posture such as forward head syndrome. Improved posture can prevent recurrence of neck pain and associated musculoskeletal issues.

## **Empowerment through Self-Treatment**

One of the significant benefits of the McKenzie Method is that it equips patients with tools to manage their symptoms independently. This self-care approach fosters confidence and reduces reliance on passive treatments or frequent medical visits.

## **Precautions and Safety Tips**

While McKenzie neck exercises are generally safe, certain precautions should be observed to prevent injury or symptom exacerbation. Proper technique and awareness of individual limitations are essential components of a safe exercise routine.

## **Consultation with a Healthcare Professional**

Before beginning McKenzie neck exercises, a professional assessment by a physical therapist or physician is recommended. This ensures correct diagnosis and identification of appropriate directional preference to guide exercise selection.

## **Perform Exercises Gradually**

Initiate movements slowly and within a comfortable pain-free range. Avoid forcing neck motions or continuing exercises that increase pain intensity or cause new symptoms such as numbness or weakness.

## **Monitor Symptoms Closely**

Keep track of any changes in pain location, intensity, or associated neurological signs. If symptoms worsen or fail to improve after several days, discontinue exercises and seek medical advice.

## **Maintain Proper Posture During Exercises**

Ensure the spine remains neutral and shoulders relaxed throughout the exercises to maximize effectiveness and minimize strain. Using a mirror or feedback from a therapist can assist with maintaining correct form.

## **Incorporating McKenzie Exercises into Daily Routine**

Consistency is vital for achieving the full benefits of McKenzie neck exercises. Integrating these movements into everyday life can support ongoing neck health and prevent future issues.

## **Establish a Regular Schedule**

Set specific times during the day to perform exercises, such as morning, midday, and evening sessions. Consistent repetition helps reinforce muscle memory and spinal alignment.

## **Combine with Ergonomic Adjustments**

Optimize workstations, seating, and sleeping positions to complement the effects of McKenzie exercises. Proper ergonomics reduce undue stress on the neck and promote sustained improvement.

## **Incorporate Complementary Activities**

Engage in low-impact aerobic exercises, stretching, and strengthening routines that support overall spinal health. These activities enhance circulation and muscular endurance, complementing the McKenzie approach.

## **Regular Follow-Up with Professionals**

Periodic evaluation by a physical therapist ensures that exercise techniques remain correct and adjustments are made according to progress or changes in symptoms.

- Set reminders for exercise sessions
- Use comfortable and supportive seating
- Practice mindfulness of neck posture throughout the day
- Stay hydrated and maintain overall physical health

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What are McKenzie neck exercises?**

McKenzie neck exercises are a series of movements designed to help alleviate neck pain and improve mobility by promoting proper spinal alignment and reducing pressure on the cervical discs.

### **How do McKenzie neck exercises help with neck pain?**

These exercises help by encouraging the neck to move in specific directions that can centralize pain, reduce disc bulges, and improve posture, ultimately decreasing neck pain and stiffness.

## **Can McKenzie neck exercises prevent neck problems?**

Yes, when performed regularly and correctly, McKenzie neck exercises can help maintain spinal health, improve posture, and prevent the recurrence of neck pain or injuries.

## **Are McKenzie neck exercises safe for all types of neck pain?**

While generally safe, McKenzie neck exercises should be done under the guidance of a healthcare professional, especially if you have severe pain, neurological symptoms, or a specific medical condition affecting your neck.

## **How often should I perform McKenzie neck exercises?**

Typically, these exercises are recommended to be done several times a day, depending on your pain level and the advice of your physical therapist or healthcare provider.

## **What is a common McKenzie neck exercise?**

A common exercise involves gently extending the neck backwards by tilting the head backward while keeping the shoulders relaxed, which helps reduce pressure on the cervical discs.

## **Where can I learn to perform McKenzie neck exercises correctly?**

You can learn these exercises from a licensed physical therapist trained in the McKenzie method, or through reputable online resources and instructional videos provided by healthcare professionals.

## **Additional Resources**

### *1. McKenzie Method for Neck Pain Relief*

This book offers a comprehensive guide to the McKenzie Method specifically tailored for neck pain sufferers. It explains the principles behind the therapy and provides step-by-step exercises to alleviate pain and improve mobility. Readers will learn how to self-assess and perform exercises safely at home.

### *2. Neck Exercises with the McKenzie Approach*

Focused on practical application, this book provides detailed instructions on performing McKenzie neck exercises. It includes illustrations and tips for maximizing effectiveness while preventing injury. The author also discusses common neck conditions that respond well to these exercises.

### *3. Healing Neck Pain Through McKenzie Therapy*

This resource delves into the science and philosophy of McKenzie Therapy for neck pain. It covers diagnosis, treatment options, and the role of therapeutic exercises in rehabilitation. The book empowers patients to take control of their recovery with targeted neck exercises.

### *4. The McKenzie Neck Pain Solution*

Designed for both clinicians and patients, this book breaks down the McKenzie Method into easy-to-understand concepts. It highlights the importance of posture correction and repetitive movements to

reduce neck discomfort. Stepwise exercise programs are included to guide readers through their recovery journey.

#### *5. Self-Treatment of Neck Pain: McKenzie Exercises Explained*

This guide emphasizes self-care techniques using McKenzie exercises to manage and prevent neck pain. It provides practical advice on identifying pain patterns and adapting exercises accordingly. The author encourages proactive involvement in healing through consistent practice.

#### *6. Restoring Neck Function with McKenzie Exercises*

Focusing on restoring full range of motion, this book presents a variety of McKenzie exercises tailored for different stages of neck pain. It includes case studies and success stories to motivate readers. The approach is holistic, combining exercises with lifestyle adjustments.

#### *7. Neck Pain and the McKenzie Method: A Patient's Guide*

Written in accessible language, this book is ideal for patients new to the McKenzie Method. It explains neck anatomy, common causes of pain, and how McKenzie exercises can help. The step-by-step instructions are supported by clear diagrams.

#### *8. Advanced McKenzie Techniques for Neck Rehabilitation*

Targeted at healthcare professionals and advanced patients, this text explores complex McKenzie exercises for chronic neck issues. It discusses assessment protocols and modifications for difficult cases. The book also integrates McKenzie principles with other therapeutic modalities.

#### *9. Preventing Neck Pain with McKenzie Exercises*

This preventative-focused book teaches readers how to incorporate McKenzie neck exercises into daily routines to avoid pain onset. It underscores the importance of posture, ergonomics, and regular movement. Practical tips and quick exercises make it easy to maintain neck health.

## **Mckenzie Neck Exercises**

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**mckenzie neck exercises: 7 Steps to a Pain-Free Life** Robin McKenzie, Craig Kubey, 2014-12-30 A fully revised and updated edition of the program that's sold more than 5.5 million copies worldwide—plus a new chapter addressing shoulder pain Since the McKenzie Method was first developed in the 1960s, millions of people have successfully used it to free themselves from chronic back and neck pain. Now, Robin McKenzie has updated his innovative program and added a new chapter on relieving shoulder pain. In 7 Steps to a Pain-Free Life, you'll learn: · Common causes of lower back, neck pain and shoulder pain · The vital role discs play in back and neck health · Easy exercises that alleviate pain immediately Considered the treatment of choice by health care professionals throughout the world, 7 Steps to a Pain-Free Life will help you find permanent relief from back, neck, and shoulder pain.

**mckenzie neck exercises: Treat Your Own Neck** Robin McKenzie, 2011 The neck or cervical spine -- Understanding the spine -- Common causes of neck pain -- Understanding the McKenzie

Method -- The exercise program -- When to apply the exercises -- When acute neck pain strikes.

**mckenzie neck exercises: Overcoming Back and Neck Pain** Lisa Morrone, 2008-02-01  
One-third of Americans report having had low-back pain in the last 30 days. Ten percent are enduring chronic neck pain right now! Drug prescriptions, endless treatments, and limited lifestyles are just some of the consequences. Expert physical therapist Lisa Morrone says no to the treadmill of suffering. From nearly 20 years of teaching and practicing physical therapy, she offers a clinically proven approach to overcoming nagging back or neck pain. Lisa puts in one straightforward, accessible package the most effective exercises, guidelines, and lifestyle adjustments, involving... proper posture and core stability strengthening and stretching healthy movement patterns and ergonomics recovery from pain from compressed or ruptured discs nutrition, rest, and emotional/spiritual issues With Lisa's recommendations, readers will find they can attain substantial or complete freedom from pain—which brings freedom to enjoy work, friends, and family again, and live a fulfilling life serving God and others.

**mckenzie neck exercises: Management of Acute and Chronic Neck Pain** Nikolai Bogduk, Brian McGuirk, 2006-07-24 Until recently most attention was focussed on low back pain but now the key area of interest for new research is neck pain and related headache often associated with whiplash or poor posture in working environments such as using computers. This book presents the latest research findings and gives recommendations and guidelines on how to relate those findings to the prevention and management of neck pain. It also points the way of areas where more research is needed. New volume in an established series conceived and commissioned by Sir Patrick Wall and companion to an existing title in the series by the same authors Compiled and edited by two extremely well known names in the field of research into musculoskeletal pain its management and prevention Clinically relevant and research based. Of multiprofessional interest and relevance. Fully up to the minute - based on the very latest research.

**mckenzie neck exercises: Spinal Manual Therapy** Howard W. Makofsky, 2024-06-01 Spinal Manual Therapy: An Introduction to Soft Tissue Mobilization, Spinal Manipulation, Therapeutic and Home Exercises, Second Edition is an easy-to-follow manual of clinical techniques for the spine, pelvis, and temporomandibular joint. The text provides tools rather than recipes and immerses the reader in the process of thinking as a manual therapist, rather than functioning as a technician. The clinical utility of this revised second edition combines the art and science of present day spinal manual therapy. The focus of Spinal Manual Therapy, Second Edition is to provide clinically useful treatment techniques, while being mindful of the scientific literature related to the practice of spinal manual therapy. It is an ideal resource for all those interested in grasping the basics of spinal manual therapy and transferring that knowledge into practice within a clinical environment. The hands-on approach taken by Dr. Howard W. Makofsky makes this new edition the go-to textbook for spinal manual therapy. New to the Second Edition: New pictures of examination and treatment techniques with captions Additional case studies New evidence supporting spinal manual therapy Updated references throughout the text This unique textbook has a plethora of clinical techniques, including the rationale for each of their use. With over 300 figures, illustrations, and photographs for each examination/treatment technique for various regions of the body, students and clinicians learning manual therapy will benefit greatly from Spinal Manual Therapy, Second Edition. Inside you'll find: Evaluation Soft tissue techniques Manipulative procedures Specific exercises Clinical problem solving Spinal Manual Therapy, Second Edition mirrors a course on the introduction to spinal manual therapy and will be welcomed into physical therapy curriculums, as well as appreciated by clinicians when entering clinical practice.

**mckenzie neck exercises: What to do for a Pain in the Neck** Jerome Schofferman, 2011-05-24 No one who works at a computer or drives a car will be surprised to learn that neck pain is on the rise. About 70 million people in the United States have had neck pain, and the incidence is increasing. Like back pain, neck pain can become a constant plague that is both mysterious and difficult to treat. Here at last is help. In What to Do for a Pain in the Neck, one of today's leading experts on neck pain provides a broad range of treatments and preventive measures so that you do

not have to learn how to live with pain—you can banish it.

**mckenzie neck exercises:** *Manual Therapy for Musculoskeletal Pain Syndromes* Cesar Fernandez de las Penas, Joshua Cleland, Jan Dommerholt, 2015-04-28 A pioneering, one-stop manual which harvests the best proven approaches from physiotherapy research and practice to assist the busy clinician in real-life screening, diagnosis and management of patients with musculoskeletal pain across the whole body. Led by an experienced editorial team, the chapter authors have integrated both their clinical experience and expertise with reasoning based on a neurophysiologic rationale with the most updated evidence. The textbook is divided into eleven sections, covering the top evidence-informed techniques in massage, trigger points, neural muscle energy, manipulations, dry needling, myofascial release, therapeutic exercise and psychological approaches. In the General Introduction, several authors review the epidemiology of upper and lower extremity pain syndromes and the process of taking a comprehensive history in patients affected by pain. In Chapter 5, the basic principles of the physical examination are covered, while Chapter 6 places the field of manual therapy within the context of contemporary pain neurosciences and therapeutic neuroscience education. For the remaining sections, the textbook alternates between the upper and lower quadrants. Sections 2 and 3 provide state-of-the-art updates on mechanical neck pain, whiplash, thoracic outlet syndrome, myelopathy, radiculopathy, peri-partum pelvic pain, joint mobilizations and manipulations and therapeutic exercises, among others. Sections 4 to 9 review pertinent and updated aspects of the shoulder, hip, elbow, knee, the wrist and hand, and finally the ankle and foot. The last two sections of the book are devoted to muscle referred pain and neurodynamics. - The only one-stop manual detailing examination and treatment of the most commonly seen pain syndromes supported by accurate scientific and clinical data - Over 800 illustrations demonstrating examination procedures and techniques - Led by an expert editorial team and contributed by internationally-renowned researchers, educators and clinicians - Covers epidemiology and history-taking - Highly practical with a constant clinical emphasis

**mckenzie neck exercises:** *Clinical Orthopaedic Rehabilitation: A Team Approach E-Book* Charles E Giangarra, Robert C. Manske, 2017-01-04 Evidence suggests a direct correlation between the quality of postoperative orthopaedic rehabilitation and the effectiveness of the surgery. Clinical Orthopaedic Rehabilitation, 4th Edition, helps today's orthopaedic teams apply the most effective, evidence-based protocols for maximizing return to function following common sports injuries and post-surgical conditions. Charles Giangarra, MD and Robert Manske, PT continue the commitment to excellence established by Dr. S. Brent Brotzman in previous editions, bringing a fresh perspective to the team approach to rehabilitation. - Every section is written by a combination of surgeons, physical therapists, and occupational therapists, making this respected text a truly practical how-to guide for the appropriate initial exam, differential diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation. - Treatment and rehabilitation protocols are presented in a step-by-step, algorithmic format with each new phase begun after criteria are met (criteria-based progression, reflecting current best practice). - Revised content brings you up to date with new evidence-based literature on examination techniques, classification systems, differential diagnosis, treatment options, and criteria-based rehabilitation protocols. - Extensive updates throughout include new chapters on: medial patellofemoral ligament, shoulder impingement, pec major ruptures, thoracic outlet syndrome, general humeral fractures, foot and ankle fractures, medial patellofemoral ligament reconstruction, the arthritic hip, athletic pubalgia, and labral repair and reconstruction. - Easy-to-follow videos demonstrate rehabilitation procedures of frequently seen orthopaedic conditions and commonly used exercises, and new full-color images complement the highly visual nature of the text.

**mckenzie neck exercises:** *Mechanisms and Management of Pain for the Physical Therapist - E-BOOK* Kathleen A. Sluka, 2025-05-24 Deepen your knowledge of the mechanisms of pain and redefine your approach to pain management with this essential resource! Mechanisms and Management of Pain for the Physical Therapist, Third Edition, is the only textbook that addresses the growing significance of rehabilitation and non-pharmaceutical treatments in pain care. Dr. Kathleen Sluka leads a team of more than 20 international contributors in providing a practical,

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**mckenzie neck exercises:** *Evidence-Based Management of Low Back Pain - E-Book* Simon Dagenais, Scott Haldeman, 2011-01-31 Covering all commonly used interventions for acute and chronic low back pain conditions, Evidence-Based Management of Low Back Pain consolidates current scientific studies and research evidence into a single, practical resource. Its multidisciplinary approach covers a wide scope of treatments from manual therapies to medical interventions to surgery, organizing interventions from least to most invasive. Editors Simon Dagenais and Scott Haldeman, along with expert contributors from a variety of clinical and academic institutions throughout the world, focus on the best available scientific evidence, summarizing the results from the strongest to the weakest types of studies. No other book makes it so easy to compare the different interventions and treatment approaches, giving you the tools to make better, more informed clinical decisions.

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- An interdisciplinary approach enables health care providers to work together.
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- Integration of interventions provides information in a clinically useful way, so it's easier to consider more than one type of treatment or intervention for low back pain, and easier to see which methods should be tried first.

- 155 illustrations include x-rays, photos, and drawings.
- Tables and boxes summarize key information.

- Evidence-based content allows you to make clinical decisions based on the ranking the best available scientific studies from strongest to weakest.

- Patient history and examination chapters help in assessing the patient's condition and in ruling out serious pathology before making decisions about specific interventions.
- Experienced editors and contributors are proven authors, researchers, and teachers, and practitioners, well known in the areas of orthopedics, pain management, chiropractic, physical therapy, and behavioral medicine as well as complementary and alternative medicine; the book's contributors include some of the leading clinical and research experts in the field of low back pain.
- Coverage based on The Spine Journal special issue on low back pain ensures that topics are relevant and up to date.

- A systematic review of interventions for low back pain includes these categories: patient education, exercise and rehabilitation, medications, manual therapy, physical modalities, complementary and alternative medicine, behavioral modification, injections, minimally invasive procedures, and surgery.

- Surgical interventions include decompression, fusion, disc arthroplasty, and dynamic stabilization.

- Additional coverage includes patient education and multidisciplinary rehabilitation.

**mckenzie neck exercises:** *7 Steps to a Pain-free Life* Robin McKenzie, 2014

**mckenzie neck exercises:** *Multidisciplinary Spine Care* Carl E. Noe, 2022-06-27 This book presents multiple aspects of spine care from the perspective of different disciplines. It's organized by sections focused on non-operative care, spine injections and procedures, perioperative care, operative care, pediatric care, and special topics. Each chapter has been written by a clinician whose active practice involves the topic of their chapter. Practical and clinically relevant, this book educates any practitioner who cares for patients with back and neck pain and other spine conditions about implementing a multidisciplinary team to treat the spine.

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2023-04-29 This book provides the proceedings of the 5th International Conference on Cyber Security Intelligence and Analytics. The 5th International Conference on Cyber Security Intelligence and Analytics (CSIA 2023) is an international conference dedicated to promoting novel theoretical and applied research advances in the interdisciplinary agenda of cyber security, particularly focusing on threat intelligence and analytics and countering cybercrime. Cyber security experts, including those in data analytics, incident response and digital forensics, need to be able to rapidly detect, analyze and defend against a diverse range of cyber threats in near real-time conditions. We are organizing the CSIA 2023 at Radisson Blu Shanghai Pudong Jinqiao Hotel. It will feature a technical program of refereed papers selected by the international program committee, keynote address.

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**mckenzie neck exercises:** *Stretching in the Office* Bob Anderson, 2002 Illustrates stretching exercises that can be done at the office to increase flexibility, relieve sore muscles, combat neck and back pain, prevent carpal tunnel syndrome, and reduce stress.

**mckenzie neck exercises:** *Clinical Exercise E-Book* Melainie Cameron, Steve Selig, Dennis Hemphill, 2011-02-20 Please note that this eBook does not include the DVD accompaniment. If you would like to have access to the DVD content, please purchase the print copy of this title. Exercise is integral in the treatment of debilitating conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, obesity, back pain, and arthritic conditions. This new book presents succinct summaries of the

evidence underpinning the use of exercise as therapy, and highlights through case studies the current challenges and complexities of clinical practice. This highly readable text also includes more than 30 comprehensive clinical cases exploring client presentations in the areas of cardiovascular, musculoskeletal, respiratory, neurological, metabolic and occupational rehabilitation. Clinical Exercise: a case-based approach will appeal to students and practitioners committed to evidence-based and reflective practice. - clinical presentations include obesity and overweight, occupational rehabilitation, athletic injuries, and metabolic disorders - over 30 case studies - comprehensively presented with summary boxes and discussion questions - case studies are presented in the familiar 'SOAP' clinical note taking format, as well as in engaging narratives - appendices include diagnostic and classification criteria, references to guidelines for clinical management, and contraindications for exercise in clinical populations - DVD - demonstrations of clinical interviews, physical examinations, exercise assessments, and exercise interventions with 'real-life' clients

**mckenzie neck exercises:** Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine Royal Society of Medicine (Great Britain), 1916 Comprises the proceedings of the various sections of the society, each with separate t.-p. and pagination.

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