Exercise Therapy

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Wrist and Finger Flexor Stretching: Techniques, Steps and Benefits

Explore stretching techniques for the common flexor muscles of the wrist and hand, including patient positioning, therapist hand placement, step-by-step procedures, precautions and benefits for wrist and finger mobility.

The extrinsic muscles of the fingers cross the wrist joint and influence wrist range of motion (ROM). Wrist mobility is also affected by the position of the elbow and forearm because several wrist flexors and extensors originate from the humeral epicondyles.

During stretching:

- Apply the stretch force proximal to the metacarpophalangeal (MCP) joints.
- Keep the fingers relaxed to avoid unnecessary tension.
- Stabilize the forearm to ensure selective stretching of the wrist muscles.

Patient Position

- Position the patient in a comfortable sitting position on a chair adjacent to the therapist.
- Place the patient's forearm on a treatment table for adequate support and stabilization.
- Ensure that the wrist and hand are freely accessible for stretching.

1. WRIST FLEXION STRETCH

Purpose: To elongate the wrist extensor muscles and increase wrist flexion ROM.

Hand Placement and Procedure

1. **Forearm Position:** Position the patient's forearm in supination, pronation or neutral (midposition).
2. **Stabilization:** Stabilize the patient's forearm against the treatment table to prevent unwanted movement.
3. **Hand Placement:** Grasp the dorsal aspect of the patient's hand, proximal to the MCP joints.
4. **Apply Stretch:** Gently move the patient's wrist into flexion to elongate the wrist extensor muscles.
5. **Finger Position:** Allow the fingers to extend passively and remain relaxed to avoid additional tension from the extrinsic finger muscles.
6. **Additional Stretch:** To further elongate the wrist extensors, extend the patient's elbow while maintaining wrist flexion.

Effect: Increases wrist flexion ROM by elongating the wrist extensor muscles.

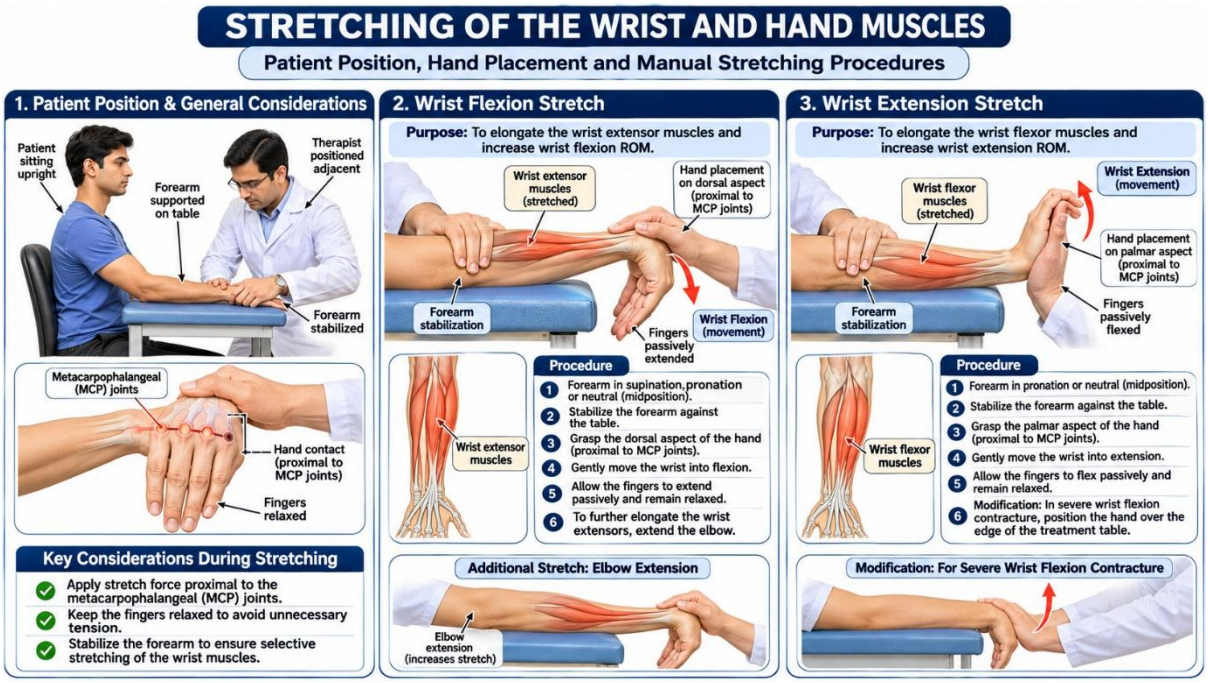
2. WRIST EXTENSION STRETCH

Purpose: To elongate the wrist flexor muscles and increase wrist extension ROM.

Hand Placement and Procedure

1. **Forearm Position:** Position the patient's forearm in pronation or neutral (midposition).
2. **Stabilization:** Stabilize the patient's forearm against the treatment table to prevent unwanted movement.
3. **Hand Placement:** Grasp the palmar aspect of the patient's hand, proximal to the MCP joints.
4. **Apply Stretch:** Gently move the patient's wrist into extension to elongate the wrist flexor muscles.
5. **Finger Position:** Allow the fingers to flex passively and remain relaxed to minimize additional tension from the extrinsic finger muscles.
6. **Modification:** In patients with severe wrist flexion contractures, position the patient's hand over the edge of the treatment table to facilitate wrist extension.

Effect: Increases wrist extension ROM by elongating the wrist flexor muscles.



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