Physiotherapy following Neck Dissection

Positioning
- When you are in bed, don’t lie flat – keep your head up
- Spend some time sitting in the chair each day

Deep Breathing and coughing
- This is important to reduce your risk of getting a chest infection
- It is most effective when done sitting upright with feet supported.
- Breathe in deeply, making sure the air gets to the bottom of your lungs.
- Hold the breath in for 2-3 seconds, then breathe out.
- Repeat 5 times, then cough.
- Do 5 deep breaths followed by a cough every hour while awake.

Walking
- It is important for you to get up and walking soon after your surgery to prevent lung problems, improve your circulation and prevent muscle wasting.
- Aim to walk around the wards at least 3 times each day, gradually increasing the distance each day.

Chin Tuck
- Do in sitting or standing, making sure your shoulders are in a good position before you start.
- Have your mouth closed, teeth slightly apart and your tongue on the roof of your mouth.
- Tuck your chin in, as if to nod ‘yes.’ You should feel a gentle stretch at the base of your skull.
- Hold for 5 seconds, then relax.
- Repeat 5 times.

Neck Flexion/Extension
- Do in sitting or standing, making sure your shoulders are in a good position before you start and your chin is tucked in.
- Look down slowly, hold for 5 seconds.
- Then look up slowly, hold for 5 seconds. Keep your lips closed.
- Repeat 5 times.

Neck Rotation
- Do in sitting or standing, making sure your shoulders are in a good position before you start and your chin is tucked in.
- Turn your head away from the operated side until you feel a gentle stretch.
- Hold 15 seconds.
- Repeat 3 times.
- Progress by using your hand to assist with the stretch

Neck Side Bending
- Do in sitting or standing, making sure your shoulders are in a good position before you start and your chin is tucked in.
- Tilt your head away from the operated side until you feel a gentle stretch.
- Hold 15 seconds.
- Repeat 3 times.
- Progress by using your other hand to assist with the stretch

Deep Breathing and coughing
- This is important to reduce your risk of getting a chest infection
- It is most effective when done sitting upright with feet supported.
- Breathe in deeply, making sure the air gets to the bottom of your lungs.
- Hold the breath in for 2-3 seconds, then breathe out.
- Repeat 5 times, then cough.
- Do 5 deep breaths followed by a cough every hour while awake.

Walking
- It is important for you to get up and walking soon after your surgery to prevent lung problems, improve your circulation and prevent muscle wasting.
- Aim to walk around the wards at least 3 times each day, gradually increasing the distance each day.
Neck and Shoulder Exercises

- These exercises are important to maintain or regain full movement of your neck and shoulders.
- A little discomfort is normal at first, but none of the exercises should cause or worsen pain.
- If your neck/shoulder starts to ache while doing the exercises, cease until the pain subsides, then try them again later that day.
- You may start when all the drains have been removed from your neck.
- You should continue these exercises for 3 months, especially if you are having radiation therapy.
- If you find that you are doing the exercises regularly without seeing improvement in your range of motion, or you are getting ongoing pain while doing them, please ask your surgeon for a referral to outpatient physiotherapy at your nearest hospital.

Scapula Setting

- Sit with your feet flat on the ground and your hands resting gently in your lap.
- Take a breath in, then as you breathe out try to sit up straighter and squeeze the bottom tips of your shoulder blades towards your spine.
- Hold for _____seconds, then relax.
- Repeat _____times.

Shoulder Flexion

- Lie down with your knees bent so both feet are on the ground.
- Hold a walking stick or umbrella in both hands, palms facing down.
- Raise the stick over your head, using the non-operated side to help the operated side if needed.
- Repeat _____times.

Progress to doing this exercise in sitting or standing, making sure you think about setting your shoulder blades back and down before you raise your arms up.

Shoulder Abduction

- Lie down with your knees bent so both feet are on the ground.
- Start with your arm straight by your sides.
- You can use a walking stick or umbrella to help if you need.
- Repeat _____times.

Progress to doing this exercise in sitting or standing, making sure you think about setting your shoulder blades back and down before you raise your arms out to the side.