**Shoulder Health Action Plan**

1. **Posture: In AND out of the pool**



Optimal posture = longer reach (distance per stroke) and stronger pull

Well-aligned posture allows arms and legs to maximize their flexibility and puts muscles in a position where they can exert the most power.

1. **Thoracic (middle) Spine Flexibility: rotation, flexion, extension**
	1. Foam roller and bench



* 1. Diagonals “chop and lift” in tall or half kneel



* 1. Quadruped (Hands and knees) Thoracic Rotation
	2. Huge array of yoga positions: cat-cow, sun salutation, etc





1. **Scapular (shoulder blade) Stability**

Proximal stability before distal mobility – need a stable base (core) for the muscles in arms and legs to exert lots of force

How to strengthen?

* + 1. Scapular Setting – squeeze your shoulder blades back together and down as though you’re putting them into opposite back pockets. This is a basic part of all good posture and should be how to begin and what you re-check many times throughout any exercise program.



* + 1. Prone squeeze and lift (the letter I):



* + 1. Prone bent squeeze and lift (the letter T): 
		2. Non-streamline superman (the letter Y)



* + 1. Prone or quadruped opposite arm/leg lift



* + 1. Rows – in any position, elbows out OR to sides, goal is to squeeze your shoulder blades together and down as you pull back



* + 1. Push-up with a ‘plus’ – normal push-up with a stable trunk from feet, knees, or against wall. Hold plank position and press up another inch or so as you feel your shoulder blade slide out to the side.



1. **Rotator Cuff Strengthening**
	1. Internal rotation and external rotation – hold elbow at side and rotate hand towards or away from body

 

* 1. Forward flexion, abduction, and “scaption”:





1. **Technique! Focus points:**
	1. Rotation:
		1. stable trunk, shoulders and hips rotate together
		2. Head is steady (rudder)
	2. Entry:
		1. In front of shoulder
		2. Middle finger first (magic dot)
	3. Catch:
		1. Move from straight elbow to boomerang position, hand remains in line with shoulder
	4. Pull:
		1. Shoulder safe zone
		2. Maintain boomerang throughout
		3. “in-line” pull
		4. Pull is powered by trunk rotation
	5. Recovery:
		1. High elbow to encourage rotation
		2. Hand relaxed and swings wide
	6. REMEMBER:
* Form before intensity
* Rapid increase in intensity increases rate of injury. Consider increasing dry-land preparation and off-season training to minimize injuries