

⌘13 Pause and Practice:

Increasing Upper Extremity Horizontal Abduction of the UE in Supine

This is an excellent way to prevent or treat soft-tissue tightness of the shoulder.

Starting Position

- Begin with your patient lying on the mat table in supine. Hips and knees are flexed with the feet on the mat table. Preparation includes putting the muscles of the trunk on length. (See *Pause and Practice* ⌘12)

Handling

- Support the weight of the arm tucked into your side at the elbow and under the scapula. Do not pull on the arm; just cradle it next to you.
- Gently but firmly begin scapular mobility in elevation/depression and protraction. Go to end range, within a pain-free range.
- As the scapula glides, you are now ready to try horizontal abduction of the upper extremity.
- Slowly and carefully lower the arm down to the mat table. Go slowly, a shoulder can be painful when lowered.
- With the arm supported on the mat table, once again gently rotate the trunk and lower the knees. Repeat, each time increasing the range of abduction to tolerance.



Tip

If you want to maximize horizontal abduction and give greater length to the pectoralis, bring both arms into horizontal abduction.

- Gentle slow stretches will be helpful.
- With any increase in tone or pain associated with tightness, be sure to work slowly and carefully.
- Your hands should be firm but never forceful.