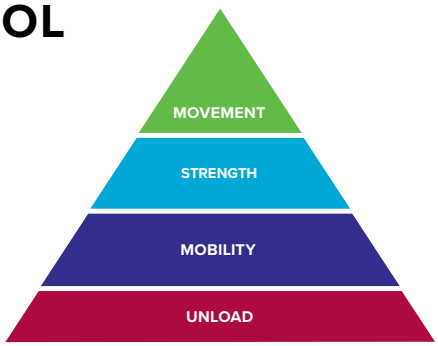
NECK STRAIN / SPRAIN REHAB PROTOCOL



This rehabilitation protocol is a companion to the online Neck Strain / Sprain Rock Rehab Protocol written by Dr. Jared Vagy DPT. This step-by-step protocol will take a climber through a four-phase system to unload, gain full mobility, improve strength and eventually return to pain-free climbing movement. Timelines are provided as recommendations based on stages of tissue healing and may vary based on the individual.

The information in this protocol is not intended to diagnose or treat any medical condition. Always consult your physician or physical therapist before beginning any rehabilitation program. If you experience pain or difficulty with the recommended exercises, stop and consult your healthcare provider. Your use of this protocol indicates your assumption of the risk of injury and is an acknowledgment of your own sole responsibility for your health and safety. The author assumes no liability for injuries sustained by readers who engage in exercises or recommendations described in this protocol.

CLASSIFICATION CRITERIA

Go to the Neck Strain / Sprain Rock Rehab Protocol and view the orthopedic test cluster for a neck strain / sprain. You will fit into a rehabilitation category based on the results from the orthopedic tests.

Neck Rotation with Unload



Spurlings Test



Use the table below to determine your rehabilitation category based on the results from your orthopedic tests. You will fit into a rehabilitation category (mild, moderate or severe) based on the number of tests that are positive. Once you have determined your rehabilitation category, you can use the specific protocol in this document and use the rock rehab videos as a reference.

	Mild	Moderate	Severe
Positive Tests	1 out of 2 tests positive and pain is <3/10	1 out of 2 tests positive and pain is >3/10	2 out of 2 tests positive and pain is >3/10

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MILD - 1/2 TESTS POSITIVE AND PAIN <3/10

1-6 DAYS (WEEK 0 TO 1): UNLOAD AND MOBILITY

The goal of this phase is to unload the affected tissues and improve mobility

- 3 Days rest from climbing
- Unload: Perform towel traction for 5-10 minutes up to 3 times per day
- Mobility Level 1: Soft Tissue Release of the Neck - 3-5 minutes up to 3 times per day
- Mobility Level 1 Variation: Thoracic Spine Segmental Extension - 3 sets of 10 repetitions daily
  - Perform in additional to mobility level 1 to improve thoracic motion and reduce stress on the neck
  - Can be performed without a resistance band and without a partner
- Mobility Level 2: Self Fist Traction - 3 sets of 30-second holds up to 3 times per day
- Mobility Level 3: Chin Tuck with Overpressure - 3 sets of 30-second holds up to 3 times per day
- Mobility Level 3 Variation 1: Upper Trapezius and Levator Scapula Stretch - 3x30 seconds up to 3x per day
  - Perform if the neck rotation with unload assessment is positive
- Mobility Level 3 Variation 2: SNAGS - 3 sets of 6 repetitions up to 3x per day
  - Perform if the Spurlings assessment is positive
- After 3 days of rest: Easy climbing avoiding slouching and overextending your neck

7-13 DAYS (WEEK 1 TO 2): UNLOAD, MOBILITY AND STRENGTH 1

The goal of this phase is to maintain mobility and improve low level strength

- Allow adequate rest between climbing days: One day on and two days off
- Unload: Perform towel traction technique only during acute pain
- Mobility Level 1, 2, and 3: Continue to perform mobility exercises and the applicable variations
- Strength Level 1: Chin Tuck Against Gravity - 3 sets of 30-second holds once each day
- Moderate climbing avoiding slouching and overextending your neck

14-20 DAYS (WEEK 2 TO 3): MOBILITY AND STRENGTH 2

The goal of this phase is to maintain mobility and improve moderate strength

- Discontinue towel traction and decrease rest time between climbing days: One day on and one day off
- Mobility Level 1, 2, and 3: Continue to perform mobility exercises
- Strength Level 1: Continue to perform this exercise
- Strength Level 2: Helmet Press on Wall - 3 sets of 30-second holds once each day
- Strength Level 2 Variation: Neck Flexion with Arm Raise - 3 sets of 10 repetitions once each day
  - Select this exercise if you can perform helmet presses on the wall with out pain
- Supplementary Strengthening: T's, Y's and L's - 3 sets of 8 repetitions daily
  - Optional Exercise: Can be continued during the next phase of the rehabilitation program
- Moderate climbing without restriction

21-28 DAYS (WEEK 3 TO 4): MOBILITY, STRENGTH 3, AND MOVEMENT

The goal of this phase is to maintain mobility, improve strength and return to hard climbing

- Return to regular climbing schedule: Two days on and one day off
- Mobility Level 1, 2, and 3: Continue to perform mobility exercises
- Strength Level 1 and 2: Continue to perform both strength exercises
- Strength Level 3: Standing Band Belay - 3 sets of 30-second holds once each day
- Hard climbing

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