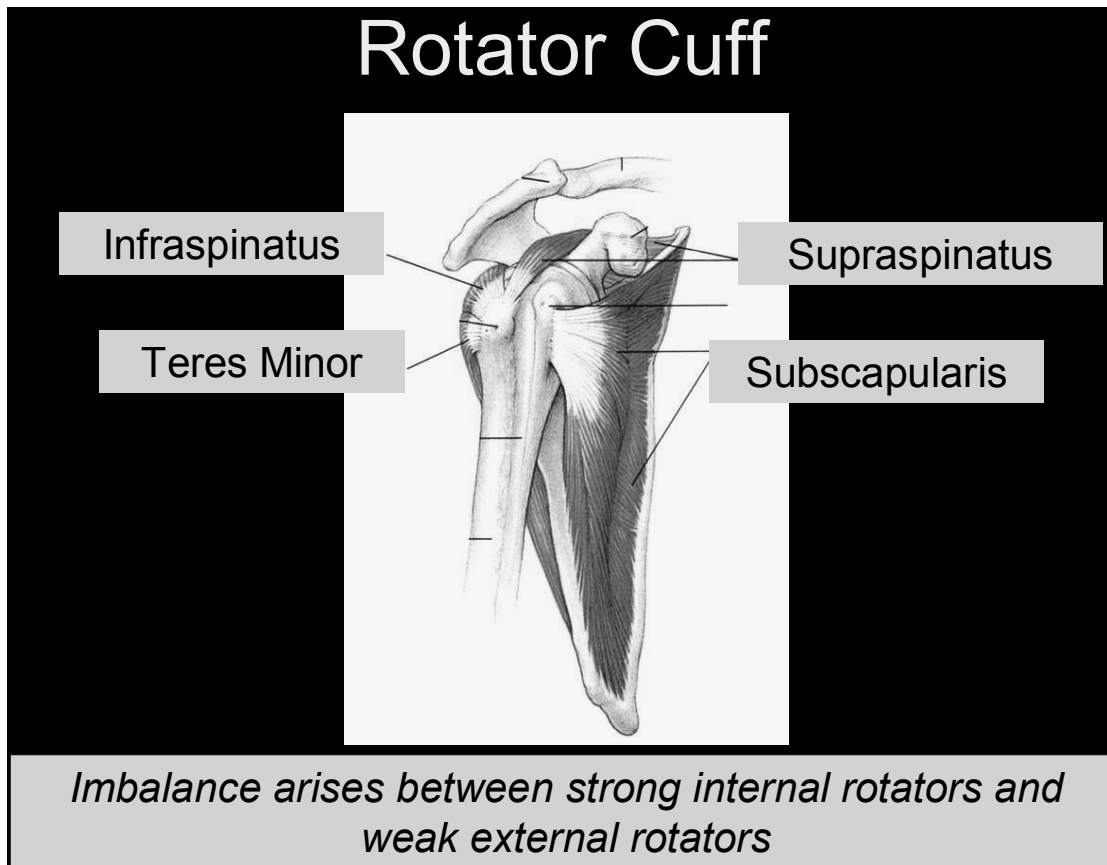


## A note on the rotator cuff

The dynamic (active) stabilizers of the glenohumeral joint are the **rotator cuff muscles**, which serve to control the position of the humeral head in the glenoid fossa. The rotator cuff musculature balances the forces of the deltoid muscle.

The rotator cuff muscles, principally the **supraspinatus**, with **infraspinatus**, **teres minor** and **subscapularis**, counteract the action of the deltoid by preventing the head of the humerus from moving superiorly when the arm is raised. An imbalance between the deltoid and the rotator cuff muscles may result in excessive superior movement of the humeral head causing impingement of the subacromial structures. (*Shoulder Impingement*).



Seeley, R.R., Stephens, T.D. & Tate, P. (1989) Anatomy and Physiology, USA.

## Shoulder Rotator Cuff Exercises

### Active Anatomy Recommendations:


- *Always include EXTERNAL rotation as part of a shoulder injury prevention program.* The external rotators are much weaker than internal rotators and therefore require extra attention to avoid imbalances. *Start with arm by the side and slowly increase range of abduction performing external strengthening exercises.*
- *Other recommended actions of the glenohumeral joint for optimal shoulder function is both posterior and inferior translations of the humeral head. NB: SUBSCAPULARIS plays a vital role in glenohumeral depression and posterior translation, and therefore, and important part of retraining for shoulder impingement injuries and poor upper body postures.*

### Subscapularis Progressions

#### Guidelines:

Note that this is only a guideline. Your client's level of skill and health will determine where they should begin an exercise program. These exercise progressions may not be appropriate for everyone. If you are unsure as to whether your client is ready to start an exercise program consult a physician. The developers of these guidelines take no responsibility or liability for any harm or injury occurring from undertaking the exercises below.

In order to commence this exercise routine the client must have the appropriate upper body flexibility, with core muscle recruitment and stability.

Exercise Description	Exercise Picture
<b>Subscapularis Progressions</b>	
<p><b>Function:</b> Subscapularis is particularly noted to help with pulling the humeral head downwards, thereby reducing shoulder impingement problems.</p> <p>To be able to complete these exercises your client needs to have the appropriate amount of internal rotation range - hand behind back - the lower the hand is placed on the bottom the easier it is on the shoulder. The ideal position for the hand is just above the sacrum.</p> <p>A good subscapularis exercise will be one <b>without</b> any compensatory movements such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forward tilting shoulder &amp; winging scapula</li> </ul>	 <p style="text-align: right;">Low Hand</p>

- Elevating scapula
- Wrist movements
- Excessive elbow bending



Start Position

### Prone - Body weight only

- Lying prone, head supported on the floor
- Place hand behind back just above sacrum
- Gently set scapula downwards and backwards to open the chest slightly off the floor.
- Then, if no pain, maintain the forearm line and lift arm a few cms off the back. Hold for 5 seconds and slowly lower.
- Repeat 2x 15 reps



Start Position

### Prone - Light Dumbbell lifts

- Lying prone, head supported on the floor
- Place hand behind back just above sacrum
- Using ½ kg dumbbell to start
- Gently set scapula downwards and backwards to open the chest slightly off the floor.
- Then, if no pain, maintain the forearm line and lift weight a few cms off the back.
- Hold for 5 seconds and slowly lower.
- 

Repeat 2x 15 reps



### Standing Push Aways - 2 hands

- Start standing in neutral posture with the feet only just away from the wall. Place hands behind back.
- Using a pressure through the palm of the hands and keeping the elbows steady, push your body weight away from the wall (just slightly).
- Repeat 2 x 15 reps

Progress to:

### Standing Push Aways - 1 hand

Take away one arm and repeat above exercise

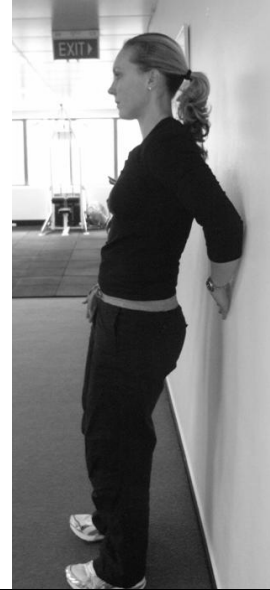


## Standing Push Aways

- Foot Width away from wall
- 2 hands then progress to 1 handed

Standing much further away from the wall (length of your foot). Repeat the above push away exercise. The only difference is there is more body weight to push away whilst keeping shoulder set in neutral position.

Goal: 2x15 reps one handed.



I hope this helps to add another dimension to your shoulder training to prevent and rehabilitate more effectively. Happy training!

## Merrin Martin

B.App.Sc.(Physio), B.Sp.Sc.(Ex.Science), Cert IV Pilates, Cert IV Workplace Assessment & Training, Cert IV Fitness, M.A.P.A.

## Active Anatomy

Health Professional Workshops

0414 423 744

[www.activeanatomy.com](http://www.activeanatomy.com)