Nerve Glide Exercises

What are nerve glide exercises and how often should they be performed?
Nerve glide exercises are designed to keep the 4 major nerves in your arm gliding to their full capacity. There are both formal and functional nerve glide exercises. These exercises should be performed twice a day.

What are the key points to remember when performing these exercises?
- Always start in the same position each time
- Be aware of the symptom responses including area and nature
- Be aware of posture
- Aim for symmetry
- Increased sensitivity/pain = increased tension
- Functional positions increase normal glide
- You can hold each position for up to a minute

Formal Nerve Glide Exercises

1. Median Nerve
   - Look at hand
   - Extend elbow
   - Extend arm out sideways with hand held forwards until it’s just above head.
   - Extend wrist
   - Tip head away from test side

2. Radial Nerve
   - Hold arm to side
   - Flex wrist, look at palm
   - Internally rotate arm and look at wrist backwards
   - Depress shoulder girdle
   - Look away

3. Ulnar Nerve
   - Look at hand and hold as if holding a tray
   - Look away or retract cervical spine
   - You can also attempt mask position

4. Musculocutaneous Nerve
   - Hold thumb with fingers
   - Ulnar deviate wrist
   - Extend shoulder and elbow
Watch movement and then look away

**Functional Nerve Glide Exercises**

**Median nerve**
- Air sliding movement can be done in pronation or supination
- Upgrade to “busy bee” movement focuses on the wrist and its contents specifically
- Slider extend wrist and elevate shoulder

**Radial nerve**
Think of doing the “waiter’s dance” when doing this exercise.

**Ulnar nerve**
- Towel dry back at an angle
- Brush hair (quick and repetitive)
- Plait hair (sustained)

“Air slicing movements of the Median Nerve, without including nerve glide at the wrist.” Adapted from The Sensitive Nervous System, David Butler, January 2000