**PT Tips: Hand and Wrist Function February 3, 2021**

**General Concepts:**

**Range of motion and flexibility are key components to improve and/or maintain function**

Self-massage- i.e. trigger points, slow, lengthening massage, assisted soft tissue techniques with active stretching

Weight Bearing on forearms or hands to reduce unwanted spastic tone

Hold/release of muscle groups

Passive stretching using props-slow, sustained stretches-to the point of mild discomfort. Make sure you feel lengthening not tightening

**Tools:**

Firm ball, rolling pin, towel roll, cotton ball, bubble wrap

Sensory stimulation tools: from very rough towel to soft silk and fleece material

Heat pad for relaxation

Ice cube/cup for stimulation

**Exercise Progression:**

Postural check in: Put yourself in a position conducive to accomplishing your goal

Stretching/sensory stimulation component: from 30 seconds to 5 minutes

Neural Pathway stretches: assume the stretch position slowly, listen to your body-lengthen for 2 to 5 seconds then oscillate out of stretch for 2 to 5 seconds. Avoid Pain!! Just a tingling sensation

Strengthening exercises: Vary the exercises throughout the day-maybe only I to 3 minutes but focus on 1 or 2 exercises and the quality of the exercise. Attach it to something you do every day. Always incorporate a postural “setting” of your neck and shoulder girdle before and throughout the exercise. You may even do them as a warm up prior to doing something like chopping vegetables or writing a letter.

**Remember to breathe!!**