



PREVENTION & REHABILITATION: SELF-MANAGEMENT: PATIENT SECTION

## Press in Snatch<sup>☆</sup>



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Training with a bar is a fundamental approach to exercise. Like dumbbells, kettlebells, sandbags, medicine balls, pulleys and other weighted devices it has its own unique application. The Press in Snatch bar exercise shown here can be used by anyone from an Olympic Weight Lifter to a sedentary person. This self-care article will show its purpose as well as show you how to perform this exercise properly.

A common problem for athletes, “weekend warriors”, and sedentary people alike is decreased mobility in the mid-back or thoracic spine. In particular a slumped or slouched posture with restricted extension mobility of the mid back. The Press and Snatch exercise, even if performed with only a wooden dowel or broom stick, is one of the simplest ways to loosen this predictably stiff area.

This is important since a slumped forward posture when lifting or bending can be a mechanism of injury for the low back, neck or shoulder girdles (McGill, 2007; Liebenson, 2006).

### Overhead Squat Assessment (Gregorek and Gregorek, 2009)

- Stand facing a doorjam or post with your nose nearly touching the post
- Hold a bar or dowel in your hands with a wide grip
- Squat down as deeply as possible without rounding your lower back

#### Scoring

- Measure with a chair, box, cushion, etc the exact depth you can squat to while maintaining your lower back arched forward (see Figure 1)

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### The Press in Snatch

- Hold a bar or dowel behind your head with a wide grip
- Squat down until you feel a stretch in your middle back (Figure 2a)
- Squat a little deeper if possible
- Press the bar or dowel overhead 3–5 times (Figure 2b)
- Return to the standing position
- The exercise may be progressed by going a little deeper (Figure 2c)

#### Common mistake

- Poking your chin out (Figure 3)

#### Key point

Feeling a “burn” in your mid-back is not harmful. In fact this is a deep stretch that you most likely need because your back has become too used to flexing forward due to sitting too much.

### The Press in Snatch Facing a Post

- Stand facing a post or door jam with your nose almost touching
- Your feet should straddle the post (Figure 4a)
- Squat down and press the bar/dowel overhead (Figure 4b)

#### Key point

- Note that when facing a post or door jam that you can’t squat as deeply
- This is because you are automatically cued to stand up straighter
- As a result you may feel a stronger “burn” in your mid-back even though you don’t squat as deeply
- This is called a “self-limiting” exercise because you can’t really do it incorrectly.

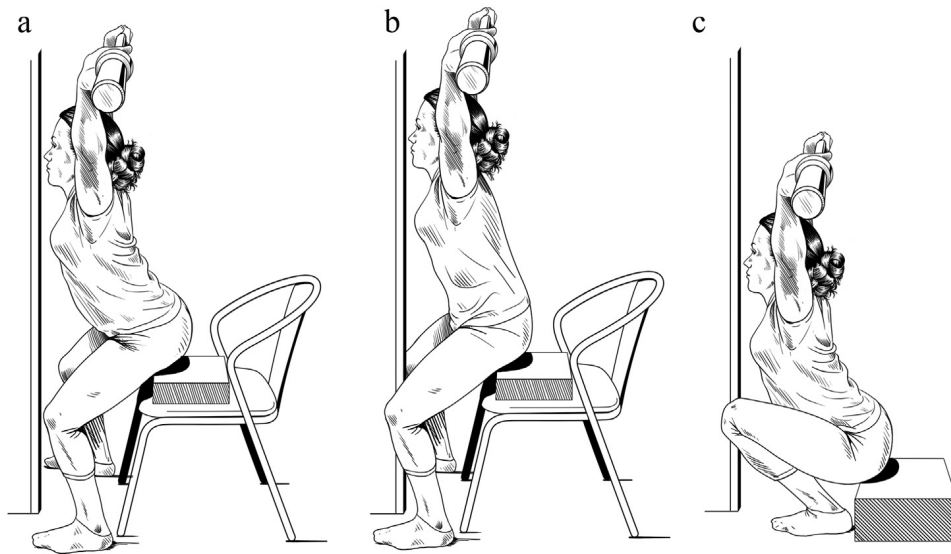


Figure 1 Overhead Squat Assessment. a) Approximately chair height; b) Dysfunction due to rounding or flexing the lower back; c) Nearly to the floor.

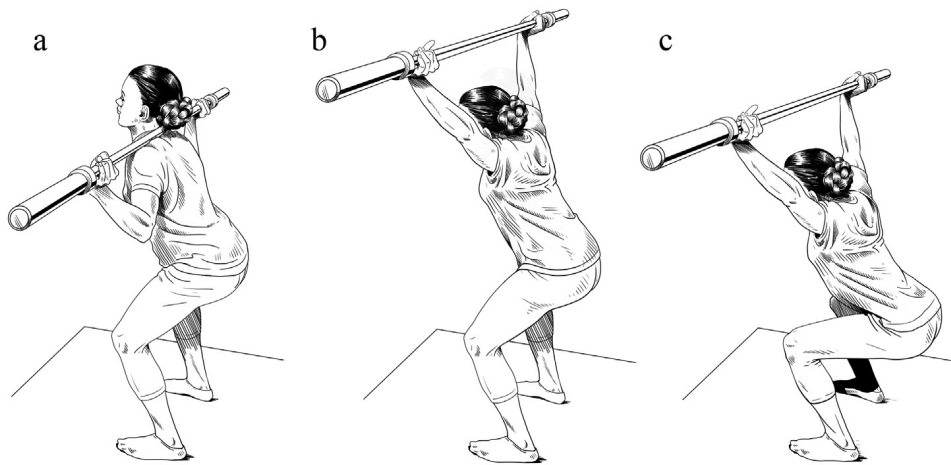


Figure 2 The Press in Snatch. a) Squat down; b) Press overhead; c) Squat deeper if you can.



**Figure 3** Common Mistake – Poking the Chin Forward.

**References**

Gregorek, Aniela, Gregorek, Jerzy, 2009. *The Happy Body: the Simple Science of Nutrition, Exercise, and Relaxation*. Jurania Press, Woodside.



**Figure 4** The Press in Snatch Facing a Post. a) Squat down; b) Press overhead.

Liebenson, C. (Ed.), 2006. *Rehabilitation of the Spine: a Practitioner's Manual*, second ed. Lippincott/Williams & Wilkins.  
 McGill, S.M., 2007. *Ultimate Back Fitness and Performance*, second ed. Wabunu.