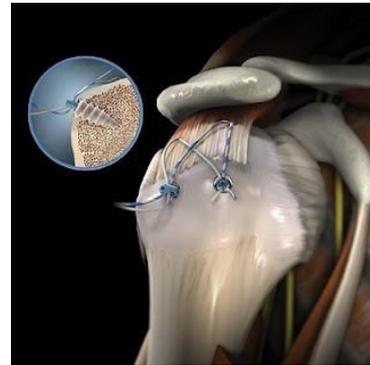


Rugby St Cross: Orthopaedic Physiotherapy

Rotator Cuff Repair (Maintenance exercises)



This advice sheet is for patients following shoulder surgery for rotator cuff tear. A rotator cuff repair involves stitching the torn tendon back onto its attachment to the upper arm bone. This may be performed either through keyhole surgery or open surgery, using sutures and bone anchors.

What to expect afterwards

You will need to rest until the effects of the anaesthetic have worn off. It may take several hours before the feeling comes back into the operated arm. **You will be required to wear a sling 24 hours a day to immobilise your shoulder.**

Pain relief

You will be given pain killers after the operation. Please take them as you are advised. You may have some discomfort for several weeks after the surgery but taking your painkillers regularly for the first few weeks will make you feel more comfortable and enable you to do your exercises.



Patient Information

Swelling

You can expect some swelling to last for several weeks after surgery. When at home wrap frozen peas or crushed ice in a dry cloth and place on your shoulder for up to 20 minutes. Use it at least 3 times per day, although there must be at least an hour between applications.

Exercises

The success of your operation will often depend on the amount of effort you are prepared to put into your rehabilitation.

Although your shoulder may be sore after the operation it is vital that you start these initial exercises to ensure that you progress as expected.

Before being discharged you will be seen by the physiotherapist who will give advice and explain the exercises you need to do.

It is essential you do the recommended exercises three times per day or you may not make a full recovery.

You may experience discomfort when doing these exercises, this is normal. If, however, you feel a sharp pain, stop and try later.

Neck exercises

Look up and down, look left and right, bend ear to shoulder on both sides.

Elbow exercises

Take arm out of sling, straighten elbow fully, then bend fully. Repeat 10 times.



Patient Information

Turn your hand over as far as it can go, then back the other way. Repeat 10 times.



Wrist/Hand exercises

Bend wrist up and down and wriggle your fingers, for 10 seconds.

Pendular hang

With the sling taken off, stand up, support yourself on the arm of a chair or a table and bend over slightly. Allow the operated arm to hang down under the effect of gravity to facilitate hygiene needs.



It is important that you do not swing your arm; just let it hang

Postural advice

Although wearing a sling, please try to observe an upright posture. **Sit up tall, don't slouch!**

It is essential that you wear your sling at all times and only complete the exercises taught to you in order to allow the torn tendon to heal back onto its attachment. Failure to follow these precautions could result in rupture of the repair and further surgery.

Fitting your sling

How to put the sling on by yourself

1. Hold onto hand grips and slide your elbow into the sling ensuring the elbow is in the corner.
2. Bring the long strap around your back and over your opposite shoulder.
3. Feed the front strap (with the Velcro) through the rectangular loop and attach the Velcro (ensuring your arm is in a horizontal position).
4. Bring the strap with the clip, under your armpit and clip in the triangular hole. You can attach the clip near to you hand or higher up (above the Velcro is also a small triangle) use the clip that your physiotherapist has showed you

How to take the sling off by yourself

To do your exercises

1. Undo the Velcro strap that says AIRCAST
2. This will allow you to remove your arm but leave the sling attached to your body
3. To put it back on , slide your arm back into the sling ensuring your elbow is in the corner and then do you the AIRCAST Velcro strap

To wash and dress

1. Unclip the clip at the front (in the triangular hole).
2. Undo the Velcro on the front shoulder strap and feed it back on itself through the loop.
3. Remove the sling from your elbow.

Discharge

You will usually be able to go home when you feel ready. You will need to arrange for someone to drive you home. You should try to have a friend or relative stay with you for the first 24 hours.

Patient Information

Stitches (if you have them) will be removed between 10 and 14 days after surgery, according to how quickly the wound heals.

Please contact the fracture clinic (through the switchboard 024 7696 4000) if the wound becomes:

- Red or inflamed (swollen or hot to touch)
- Begins to ooze or discharge
- Your wound bleeds or the discharge smells
- Your wound starts to smell

You will be contacted with an outpatient physiotherapy appointment between 10 -14 days after your surgery. If you have not heard from outpatient physiotherapy within a week please contact the department.

Further Information

If you have any queries or concerns please contact:

Rugby Physiotherapy Orthopaedic Department Telephone: 01788 663054

University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire Telephone: 024 7696 5046

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact 01788 663054 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

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