

Physiotherapy Outpatients Department Upper Limb Unit

Early Stage Exercises for Shoulder Injuries

The aim of this handout is to provide early stage exercise advice following a shoulder injury. Check with your therapist before you start to make sure that they are happy with your technique and that the exercises are suitable for your individual circumstances.

Pain relief

Shoulder injuries are painful. It is important that you have adequate pain relief to do your exercises. Your GP can prescribe this pain relief. It may be better to take your pain relief before attending for physiotherapy.

You could also try the following:-

Ice

- Protect your skin with a damp towel or cloth.
- Place a bag of frozen peas or crushed ice in a pillow case over the painful area.
- Leave in place for up to, but **no more** than 20 minutes.
- Repeat as needed.

Heat

- Wrap a warm towel, hot water bottle or wheat bag over the painful area; ensure that the stopper in the bottle is secure and that you follow the manufacturer's instructions on the wheat bag.
- This can be repeated three or four times a day.



Patient Information

Sling

The physiotherapist will advise you if it is necessary to continue to use a sling.

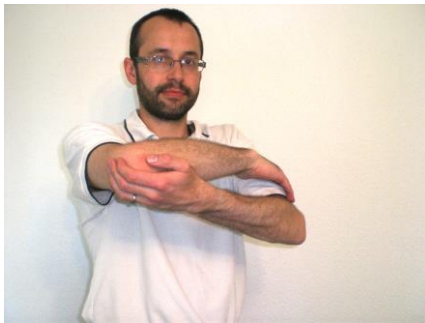
Exercises

Shoulder exercises should normally be performed regularly and frequently to maintain or improve movement.

Exercises for shoulder range of movement

The aims of 'shoulder range of movement exercises' are to encourage movement of the ball and socket joint between the top of your arm and the shoulder blade (scapula).

Self Assisted flexion



- Use your uninjured arm to help lift your arm as high as possible to the front and if possible over your head. You can do this standing, sitting or lying down on your back. Repeat Times per day.
- A variation of this exercise is to use a wall to support the weight of your arm, by walking your fingers up the wall as high as possible.

Patient Information

Stick assisted abduction



Abduction is a term that means to lift the limb away from the body and out to the side.

- Use a broom handle or walking stick to help lift your arm up to the side of your body. Repeattimes,per day
- A variation of this exercise is to use a wall to support the weight of your arm, by walking your fingers up the wall as high as possible.

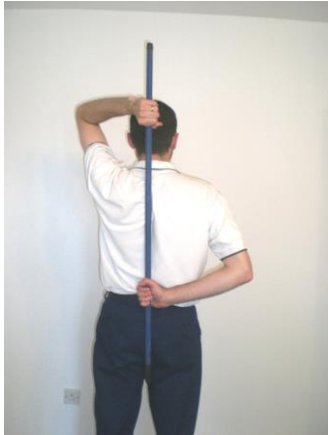
Stick assisted lateral rotation.



- Keep your elbow tucked into your body; use a broom handle or walking stick to help push your arm up to the side of your body. Repeattimes,per day

Patient Information

Assisted hand behind your back



- Take your arm behind your back as far as possible, use a broom handle, walking stick, or towel, to help pull your arm up your back as far as possible. Repeattimes,per day

Pendular swing



- Let your arm hang (relaxed), and swing it gently, forwards and backwards, side to side and in circles like the pendulum of a clock. Practice forminutes,times per day

Patient Information

Elbow and hand maintenance exercises

After shoulder injuries people are often nervous about moving the rest of the arm. This can result in stiff elbows, wrists and hands

- Bend and straighten your elbow as far as it will go times, per day.
- Open and close your hand as fully as possible times per day.

For further information contact the Physiotherapy Department on 024 7696 6013.

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