

Physiotherapy

Shoulder Class – Week 4

The aim for this week's class is to show you how to strengthen and gain more endurance in the muscles that control your shoulder.

To increase muscle strength and endurance, the muscle needs to be worked hard enough to become fatigued. For people undergoing shoulder rehabilitation, the load should not be so heavy as to cause damage.

Rule of thumb

- To increase strength, use a weight that is heavy enough that you can only just carry out 10 to 15 repetitions
- To improve endurance, once you have developed reasonable “strength”, use a weight that is heavy enough to make your muscles tired after 30 repetitions or more
- If you can't do more than eight repetitions then the weight is probably too heavy

Eccentric muscle strengthening

If you can't lift your arm normally, but have good movement when something else helps you to move your arm, then you could try something called “eccentric” exercises.

Use your uninjured arm to help you to lift your injured arm as far as it will go, then use your muscles to slowly lower the arm. Don't let the arm fall in an uncontrolled way.

With eccentric exercises, the muscles are working by “paying out” and can be a good stepping stone to normal movement. Eccentric exercises can also be done using weights as long as you can control the movement.



Patient Information

Side arm lifts



Whilst keeping your arms straight, lift your arms out to the side of your body, then slowly lower them down.

For strength **repeat 10 to 15 times three times per day**

Forward arm lifts



Lift your arm to the front of your body, pause then lower down

For strength repeat 10 to 15 times

For endurance repeat 25 to 30 times

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- With manageable weights in your hands
- Raise your elbows to shoulder height
- Straighten your arms
- Return to your starting point
- **Repeat 10 to 15 times for strength**

Biceps curl



- With a manageable weight in your hands
- Bend your elbows as far as possible
- Slowly straighten your elbow
- **Repeat 10 to 15 times for strength**

Tricep dips



- Leaning on a sturdy chair or bed with your legs slightly bent
- Slowly lower your body down, by bending your elbows
- Push yourself up so that your elbows are straight
- **Repeat 10 to 15 times**
- You can vary this exercise by doing wall press-ups or half press-ups

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Spinal twists



- Sit upright with a chair either side of you whilst holding a manageable weight in your hand
- Engage your “core” muscles
- With control, rotate to one side
- Straighten your arms and put the weight down onto the chair
- Engage your core muscles
- Pick up the weight and rotate to the other side

You could make this harder by straightening your arms as you twist or by using a heavier weight

Subscapularis lift



- Take your hand behind your back whilst holding a weight
- Lift your hand away from your back
- Relax, then **repeat 10 to 15 times**

This exercise can be progressed by lying on your front and then repeating the exercise

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Rotator cuff

The rotator cuff exercises have been put into the exercise sheet three times now to highlight the importance of these muscles for shoulder movement. However, if you have had a shoulder replacement or an inoperable rupture then this exercise isn't so useful.



- Lying on your back
- Elbow away from your body resting on a rolled towel
- Elbow flexed with your hand pointed to the ceiling
- Rotate your forearm up and down
- Remember the progressions from week 3

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