

Patient Information

## Children's Emergency Department

# Shoulder injury – care advice (Parent/carer discharge information)



It is important for an injured shoulder to be returned to normal function as soon as possible while the injury heals. Movement and exercise will combat stiffness and pain relief may be required to make this possible.

### What should I do now?

- If a sling has been applied to support the limb, please ensure that your child's forearm is horizontal and that the sling is adjusted to hold it.
- Remove the limb from the sling as required for short periods (for example at mealtimes and when exercising). When in bed, your child can rest it on a pillow or on their chest.
- Your child should try to perform the following exercises a few times a day to the best of their ability, trying to make progress over time:
  - Shrug both shoulders 20 times
  - Circle both shoulders 20 times forwards and then 20 times backwards
  - Bring both shoulders as far back as you can and then as far forward as possible 20 times
  - Lean forwards and let the injured limb swing forwards and backwards 20 times and from side to side 20 times.

### Once these become easy, add the following exercises:

- Place your arms by your side and slowly raise them forward as far as you can, aiming eventually to have them pointing directly upwards.
- Repeat this, raising the arms sideways rather than forwards.



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- Place your hands behind your hips and raise them backwards gently.
- Place your hands behind the back of your neck and push elbows outwards and backwards.

Apply ice, or a cold pack of frozen peas, wrapped in a towel to any painful areas for up to 5 minutes when possible or after shoulder exercises.

**Remember**, ice can cause a burn if applied direct to skin or for too long a time.

### What medication can I give my child/adolescent?

Paracetamol and or Ibuprofen (if applicable) to be given for pain.

Paracetamol 4-6 hourly last given at.....

Ibuprofen 6-8 hourly last given at.....

### Return to school/activity:

You will need to inform the school/college that your child has sustained a shoulder injury and they will need to refrain from certain activities to rest their shoulder to ensure complete recovery.

### When to seek medical advice:

- Swelling or pain is increasing
- There is no improvement after a few days, as your child may require Physiotherapy

### For further advice/information:

- Call NHS 111 (24 hours a day)
- Contact your GP
- Contact the Paediatric Department on 024 7696 6934

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