

Post-operative shoulder exercises (restricted movement)

Therapy Services

The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- Wash your hands with soap and warm water and dry thoroughly. Use hand gel, if provided, in care facilities.
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and vomiting stay at home and do not visit relatives that are vulnerable in hospital or in residential care. You will spread the illness.
- Keep the environment clean and safe. Let's work together to keep it that way. Prevention is better than cure.

Who is this leaflet for?

This leaflet is for patients who have had shoulder surgery and who have some restriction of movement, either because of the surgery or because they have been advised to restrict movement by their consultant.

What is this leaflet about?

This information leaflet has been written to help you manage at home following your surgery. An appointment will also be arranged for you to see a physiotherapist.

Will I be in pain and if so, how best can I help myself?

A nerve block may be used during the surgery. This means that immediately after the operation the shoulder and arm often feels completely numb. This may last up to 72 hours following your operation. Some post-operative pain is expected but this can be managed with pain killers.

Your doctor or pharmacist can advise on appropriate pain relief which, if taken regularly, can improve comfort and reduce muscle spasms. If your pain is well controlled you will manage exercises more easily which will aid recovery.

Ice Therapy:

Ice packs can be used to reduce swelling and control pain. Wrap frozen peas or crushed ice in a damp, cold cloth and place on the shoulder for up to 20 minutes. This can be repeated every hour.

In order to maintain a dry wound, cover the dressing/wound with some cling film before applying the ice pack, alternatively you may be given waterproof dressings by the hospital.

Do not use ice if the area is numb, you have weeping or bleeding wounds, you are a diabetic, or have problems with your circulation.

If you have a burning sensation or notice any blistering, remove ice immediately.

Should I wear a sling?

You will be provided with a sling to support the arm. Your physiotherapist will advise you how long you need to wear this for. You may be expected to wear the sling for 6 weeks. During this time the sling should be removed for washing, dressing, and exercise only. Whilst the arm is in the sling no weight should be placed in the hand. You will also be required to wear the sling at night, and you will be unable to drive.



The application, removal and positioning of your sling will be demonstrated to you by your physiotherapist.

While you are wearing a sling it is important to loosen or release the sling regularly to move your elbow, wrist and hand to prevent stiffness at these joints. This should be done at least 4 times a day.

How should I dress myself?

Try to wear clothes that open all the way down the front such as shirts and cardigans. Put the injured arm into the sleeve first when dressing and avoid tugging on the arm. Make sure that the operated arm remains in front of you while changing and avoid reaching backwards into sleeves. When undressing, take the operated arm out of the garment last. It is important that the operated arm is supported whilst dressing. It is advisable to sit down whilst dressing for this reason.

Wear clothing under your sling to allow you to remove your sling easily for exercises

Women may find wearing a soft elastic crop top bra which they can pull up over their hips more comfortable. This may also make ladies feel more appropriately dressed when exercising or attending hospital for doctors or physio appointments.

What is the best position to rest and sleep in?

If you are sitting it may be helpful to place a pillow under the arm for added support. It is advised that patients sleep on their un-operated shoulder or back. A V-shaped pillow can limit movement at night and help sleep. Supporting your operated arm on pillows while lying on your back will usually help you to stay comfortable. It may take several weeks for it to become comfortable to lie on your injured shoulder. Lying on your back or other shoulder is therefore recommended.

What about going up and down stairs?

The banister should be held with your un-operated arm only. This may mean that a second banister may be required. Do not use your elbow on your operative side for support against the wall.

When can I use the bath or shower?

You will be required to keep your wound dry for 2 weeks following your operation.

To wash your under arm: place your operated hand on a bathroom sink and step back. This should create a gap under your arm to allow washing whilst keeping your operated arm supported.

To dry yourself, it may be easier to put a towelling bathrobe on, which will help to dry your un-operated arm.

You may need assistance to wash your un-operated arm, as you will not be able to use your operated arm for this.

Please remember to keep the surgical wounds dry and protected whilst washing. Waterproof dressings may be provided by the hospital to wear when you are washing, alternatively these can be bought from a chemist.

Can I drive?

Your doctor or physiotherapist will advise you when it is safe to return to driving. You must be safe and in full control of the vehicle before attempting to drive again. You should not drive whilst wearing a cast, brace, or sling.

Will I have physiotherapy following my operation?

Before leaving hospital a member of the physiotherapy team will explain what exercises you should do and how often you should do them. You will then be referred for follow up physiotherapy in an outpatient physiotherapy clinic.





If you have not been contacted with a follow up physiotherapy appointment within 1 week of your procedure, please contact your discharging hospital so that on-going physiotherapy can be arranged.






Is exercise helpful after surgery?

Early exercise can have a positive influence on tissue healing and reduce the potential for joint and soft tissue stiffness. Too much movement or the wrong type of exercise however may be harmful to tissue healing and it may cause inflammation which can increase your pain. If you are not sure if it is safe to do something please talk to your physiotherapist first.

Exercises as demonstrated by your Physiotherapist – to be completed 3-4 times a day

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	<p>Stand or sit.</p> <p>Lift your operated arm forward assisting the movement with your other hand, until you feel a gentle stretch in your shoulder Repeat 5 - 10 times.</p> <p>Safe Zone (if specified by your consultant) Flexion..... Abduction..... External rotation.....</p>
	<p>Stand or sit.</p> <p>Lift your operated arm to the side, assisting the movement with your other hand, until you feel a gentle stretch in your shoulder. Return to starting position. Repeat 5 - 10 times</p> <p>Safe Zone (if specified by your consultant) Flexion..... Abduction..... External rotation.....</p>
	<p>Sitting with your arm supported either in the sling or on pillows. Squeeze your shoulder blades together by gently pulling your shoulders back and down. Hold for 5 seconds.</p> <p>Repeat 5 - 10 times.</p>
	<p>Standing.</p> <p>Hold and support the wrist of the operated arm. Gently straighten and bend your elbow with your supporting hand.</p> <p>Repeat 5 - 10 times.</p>

	<p>With your forearm supported, palm turned down. Alternately turn your palm up and down keeping your elbow still. Repeat 5 - 10 times</p>
	<p>Practice making a fist and straightening your fingers, and also bending your wrist up and down. Repeat 5 - 10 times each.</p>
	<p>Sitting. Tilt your head toward one shoulder until you feel a stretch on the opposite side. Hold for 5 secs. Repeat to other side. Repeat 5 - 10 times</p>
	<p>Sitting. Turn your head to one side until you feel a stretch. Hold for 5 secs. Repeat to other side. Repeat 5 - 10 times.</p>
	<p>Sitting up straight. Pull your chin in whilst keeping your neck and back straight (not tipping your head forwards). Hold at the end position for 5 seconds. Then relax. Repeat 5 - 10 times.</p>

Who can I contact if I have any queries or questions about the information in this leaflet?

If you have any queries or concerns about this leaflet please contact a member of Therapy Services staff on the following numbers:

New Cross Hospital 01902 695596

Cannock Chase Hospital 01543 576590

If you have any medical concerns regarding wound care, dressings or slings please contact the Back In Trouble Clinic on 01902 695380
These numbers are available during normal working hours
(Monday to Friday, 8.30 – 16.00hrs)

If you require advice outside of these hours, please contact the ward from which you were discharged.

English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowałiby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。