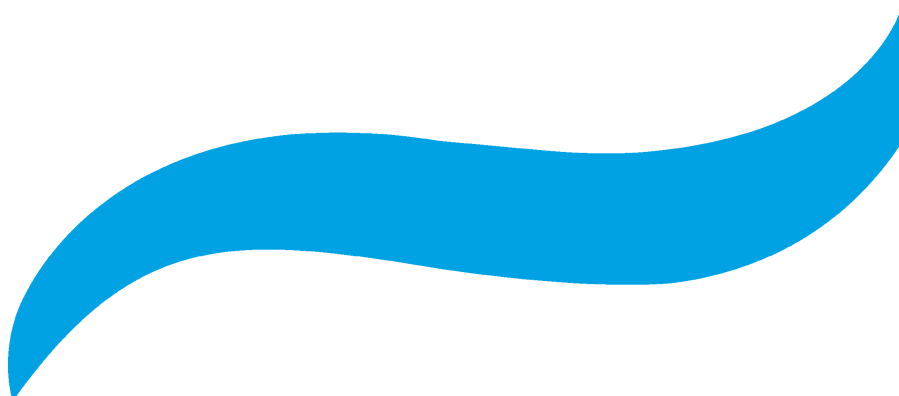




Exercises following Breast Surgery

Information for patients
Physiotherapy Department



EXERCISING AFTER BREAST SURGERY

It is very important you exercise your shoulder and arm and use them normally after your operation to prevent stiffness and loss of function. You should be able to regain all the movements in your arm and shoulder, which you had prior to your operation.

You should start by trying to use your arm for everyday activities such as brushing your hair, getting dressed and using cutlery. When you return home you should gradually introduce more strenuous activities such as hoovering, hanging out washing and driving.

You should avoid heavy lifting for six weeks after surgery.

Before returning to driving, ensure you can turn the steering wheel fully in each direction and complete a safe emergency stop.

The exercises may be uncomfortable and you may experience a stretching or pulling sensation to begin with. It is important that you do all of your exercises effectively. You may need to ask the nursing staff to give you some painkillers and you can continue to use painkillers at home as prescribed.

When exercising:

- ❖ You should aim to complete the exercises in this booklet four times a day from the day following your operation. Repeat each exercise ten times.
- ❖ Do the exercises slowly, smoothly and gently. Have a short rest after each set.
- ❖ Continue exercising for at least three months or until your full range of movement has returned. Make sure that your wound area is adequately stretched.
- ❖ Make time for your exercises as part of your daily routine.

If you have had a sentinel node biopsy, axillary node clearance or have drain(s) in then you should avoid lifting your arm above shoulder height until drains are removed.

Please use this QR code below to access a video demonstrating all of the exercises.





Exercise 1

Shrug your shoulders up towards your ears and backwards in a circle to the starting position, then repeat but move your shoulders in a forward movement.



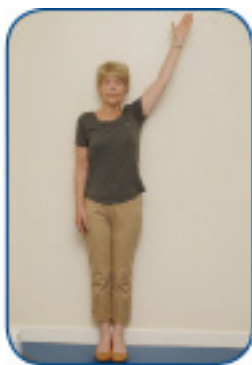
Exercise 2

Bend and straighten your elbow



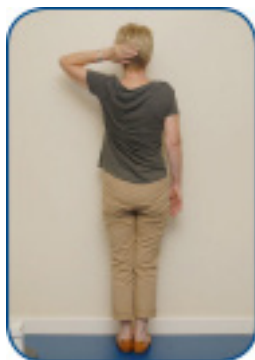
Exercise 3

Raise your arm straight out and then up towards the ceiling.



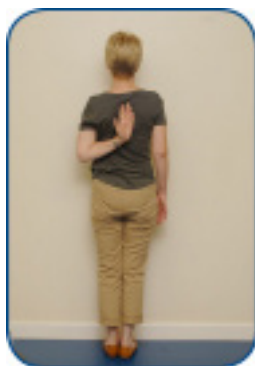
Exercise 4

Raise your arm out to the side and then up towards the ceiling



Exercise 5

Place your hand behind your head



Exercise 6

Place you hand behind your back.



Exercise 7

In this position gently let your elbow point away from your body.

TEST POSITION

Some patients may need a course of radiotherapy. You will need to place your arm in an outstretched position for this treatment. This is called the test position.

Stand with your back against the wall. Raise your arm out to the side with your elbow bent. Now take your hand back towards the wall. Ensure that your elbow and the back of your hand are touching the wall.



If you have any questions or require further information about your exercises please ask a member of the ward physiotherapy staff whilst you are in hospital or contact the Surgical Physiotherapist via hospital switchboard after discharge:

- ❖ University Hospital Wishaw – dect 5840

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