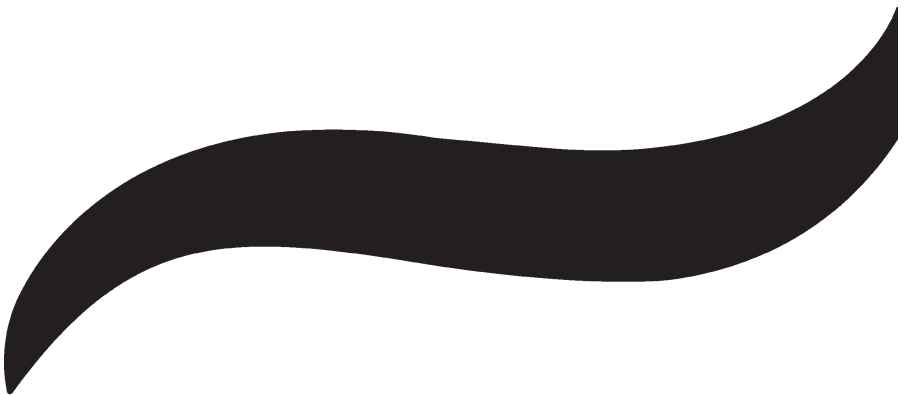




Rehabilitation Following Shoulder Surgery

Information for patients
Physiotherapy Department



WOUND CARE

Before you are discharged your nurse will give advice on wound care and suture removal if required. You will have a bulky dressing over your wound following your operation. This will need to remain in place for 24 – 48 hours then you can remove it. At home you should keep your wound dry for the first 10 days. You can wash your shoulder normally after this time, making sure you dry the area well.

A little redness is normal, and the skin preparation used before surgery has a pinky-red colour as well.

Infections are rare, but things to look out for are:

- ❖ You notice redness that spreads
- ❖ The wound has a mucky discharge
- ❖ You experience rapidly deteriorating movements
- ❖ The above are especially relevant if you are running a fever

If concern arises then you should attend A&E to be reviewed by the Orthopaedic on call team.

SUPPORTS

Following the surgery your arm will be supported in a sling for comfort and protection. It is important that you maintain a good, upright posture and keep your neck mobile whilst your arm is in a sling. Your consultant will advise how long you should use the sling. Please refer to the consultants instructions in the leaflet for any specific instructions.

The following exercises will help you avoid excessive stiffness developing whilst you heal and recover following your surgery. You should do these exercises even if you're using a sling.

EXERCISES

We recommend you take adequate pain relief around 30 minutes before exercising your arm and shoulder if you need it. Complete your exercises in a position you feel comfortable (sitting, standing). Relax and breathe during all exercises. If you are tense, this can sometimes make the exercises more painful. Remember to stop any exercises that make your symptoms worse.

1. Wrist/Hand movements: Be sure to move your fingers inwards (fist formation) and outwards (outspread hand) in a squeezing-releasing pump action and be sure to move your wrist in all directions.



Repeat 15 times

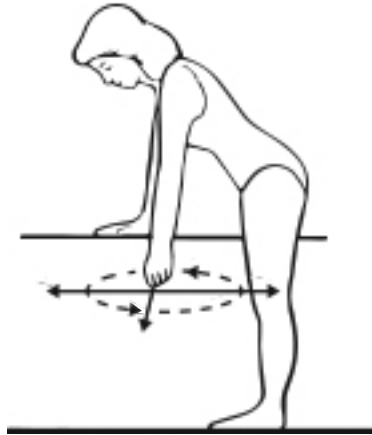
2. Elbow movements: Gently remove your arm from the sling, allow your elbow to straighten fully (hand to hip) then bend your elbow and take your hand to your mouth (if required use your other arm for assistance)



Repeat 15 times

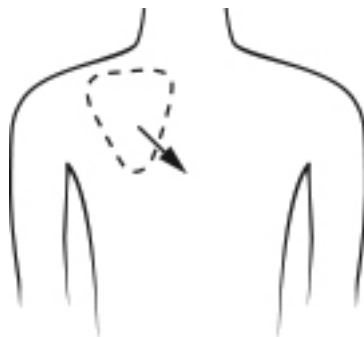
3. Shoulder movements: Your operated upper limb should be removed from the sling and your elbow straight as possible. Gently circle your arm in a clockwise direction completing small circles then gently change direction into an anticlockwise direction completing small circles

Repeat 30 times



4. Shoulder blade movements: Gently place your operated upper limb back into the sling. Take a breath in and slowly pull your shoulder blades together and downwards keeping your shoulders level.

Repeat 10 times



“Aim to complete four sets of these exercises each day”

ADVICE

- ❖ Always dress your operated upper limb first and undress it last. If you are in a sling you may need help washing and dressing yourself.
- ❖ Avoid lying on your operated upper limb initially. Lying on your back maybe the most comfortable position. Occasionally a pillow placed behind the operated arm may prevent the arm falling backwards.
- ❖ You should not attempt to drive until you are out of your sling, your pain has subsided and you feel confident in your own ability to drive. You do not need to inform the DVLA unless an issue persists beyond three months.
- ❖ During your recovery from shoulder surgery, if you have no restrictions to your shoulder movements, be sure to gradually return to activities of daily living pacing yourself appropriately.
- ❖ If you need a sling for four weeks or more you should avoid heavy lifting for up to three months from the date of your operation (because the soft tissue healing will take that long).
- ❖ You should discuss when you can return to work with your consultant or physiotherapist. Jobs involving heavy labouring/ lifting should be avoided until your shoulder is sufficiently strong enough to manage these activities. A light job may be resumed as soon as you feel able after the operation.

CONSULTANT INSTRUCTIONS:

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CONTACT DETAILS

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