

## Elbow exercises following fracture

### Information for patients

Your treatment will depend on how severe your injury is. In most cases treatment will include a sling for the first few days for pain relief.

This information leaflet provides guidance on the amount of exercises you should aim to do once instructed the sling can be removed. Depending on the type of fracture this is usually once able. Early movement of the elbow is encouraged. Although the elbow will be painful initially it is important to try to gently begin to exercise to prevent stiffness.

From the initial injury it is important that you still move your fingers and wrist to prevent stiffness while in the sling. There are exercises for those at the end of this leaflet, just gentle ones to prevent stiffness.

However let pain be a guidance on how much you can do. Aim to do as much as you can within the amounts given.

Aim to perform these exercise at least 3 times a day.

#### **Pain relief**

Take over the counter painkillers as needed. Elevate and apply a cold pack on the wrist to help with swelling if required.

#### **General advice**

Try to avoid putting weight through your elbow for the first 6-10 weeks after injury/surgery

You can use your arm/elbow for light tasks but avoid heavy repetitive tasks in the first 10-12 weeks.

Avoid swinging your arm down by your side (such as in brisk walking) for prolonged periods of time to avoid the onset of swelling in your hand.

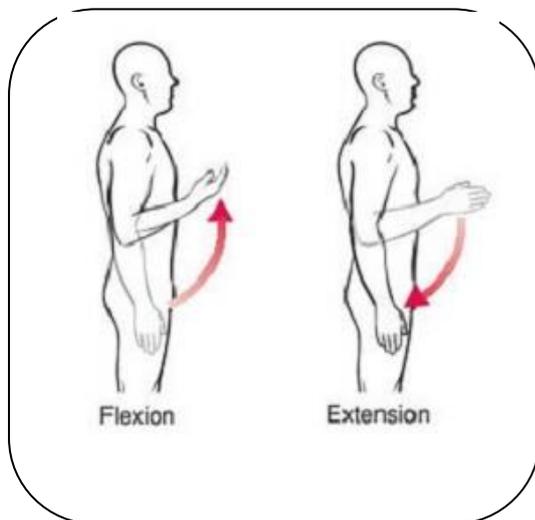
If you do notice swelling in your hand and fingers try to keep the area elevated and do your hand exercises regularly.

Driving: You should allow a period of approximately six weeks before driving and you need to be certain that you have enough strength and control to drive safely.

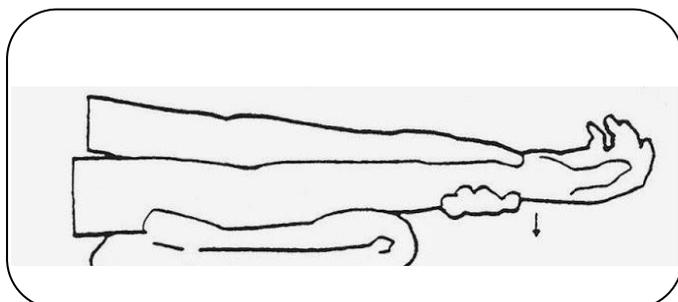
## **Elbow**

Gently remove the sling and bend at straighten the arm at the elbow

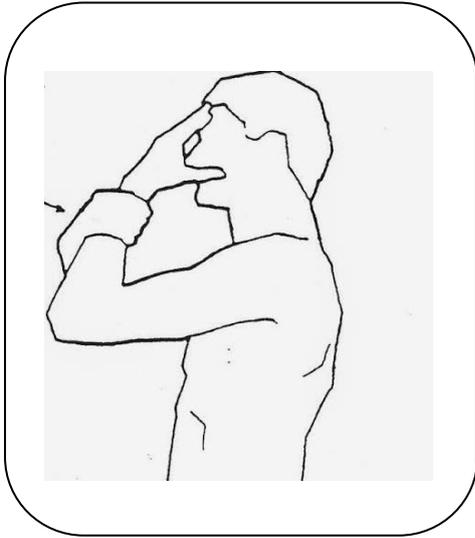
Repeat 10 times



Once comfortable with these exercises you can increase the range of movement by resting the elbow on a pillow or towel and using the other hand to gently increase the extension. Only push as far as able. Do not cause pain. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times.



In flexion use the other hand to gently push further. Hold for 5 seconds and release. Repeat 10 times.

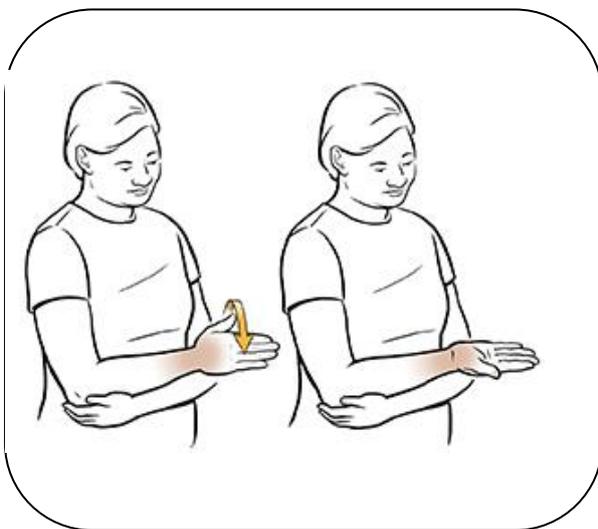


***Rotation;***

Put your elbow at your side. Bend it to 90 degrees. Slowly rotate your palm up and down until you feel a mild to moderate stretch. You can rest your forearm on a table or pillow if it help and slowly turn your palm to the ceiling and then down to the floor.

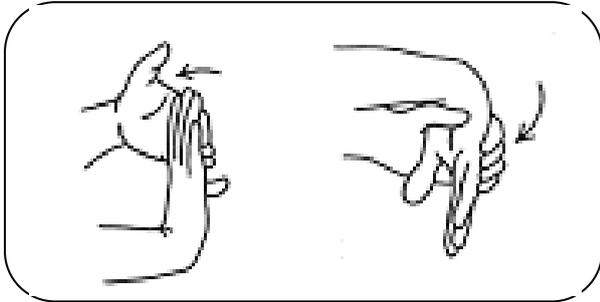
Once comfortable you can try holding an object in your hand such as a half full bottle of water.

Repeat 10-15 times



## **Wrist and fingers**

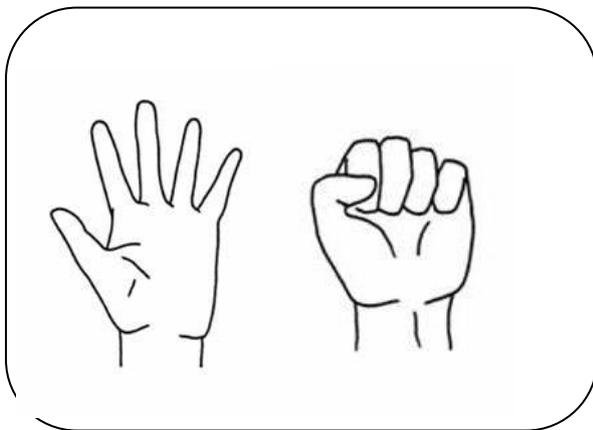
### ***Flexion and extension;***



Move your wrist up and down as far as comfortable, you may wish to do this over the edge of a table or chair arm. You may use your other hand to stretch. Hold for 5 seconds.

Repeat each direction 10 times

### ***Finger flexion and extension;***



Make a fist with your hand and hold for 5 seconds, release. After a few days you can hold a sponge or a pair of socks in the hand of your injured arm. Squeeze the ball as hard as possible without pain.

Repeat 10 times

**If you have any comments or concerns you can contact the physiotherapy department 01642 835709.**