

Shoulder exercises following fracture

Information for patients

Your treatment will depend on how severe your injury is. In most cases treatment will include a sling or brace.

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 at around 2 – 3 weeks. Although the shoulder will be painful initially it is important to try to gently begin to exercise to prevent stiffness.

Whilst your shoulder injury is recovering it is important to keep moving the other areas around it. This won't harm the shoulder but will ensure the joints and muscles around it won't stiffen or cause pain. These exercises can be done in the sling/ with the brace and should be completed little and often, roughly five movements every few hours.

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.

<https://www.southtees.nhs.uk/services/physiotherapy/community/staff-area/staff-area-menu/exercises-emailing/shoulder/shoulder-movement-flexibility/>

Please also use this link to exercises on line with video support

Pain relief

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

Try to avoid putting weight through your shoulder for the first 8-12 weeks after injury/surgery

You can use your arm 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.

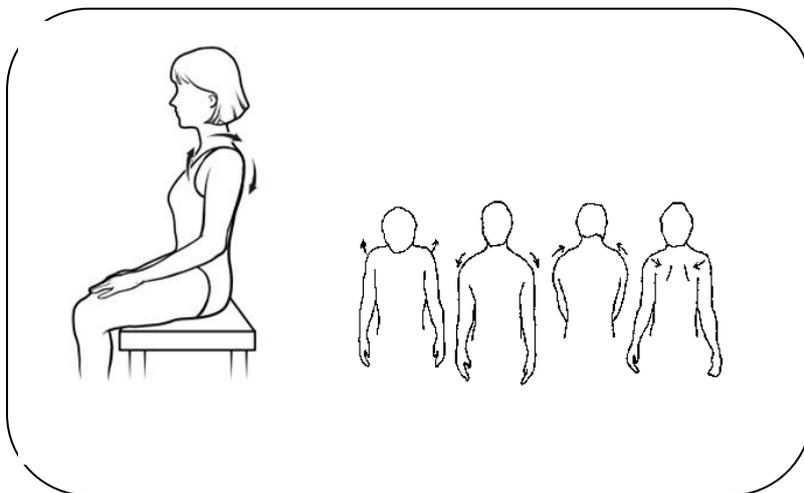
Driving: You should allow a period of approximately six weeks before driving and you need to be certain that you have enough strength and control to drive safely.

Time off work: Most people are back at work at around 8 weeks however this is dependent on the nature of your job. It is usually around 12+ weeks before you can return to a manual heavy job

Shoulder-Initial stage

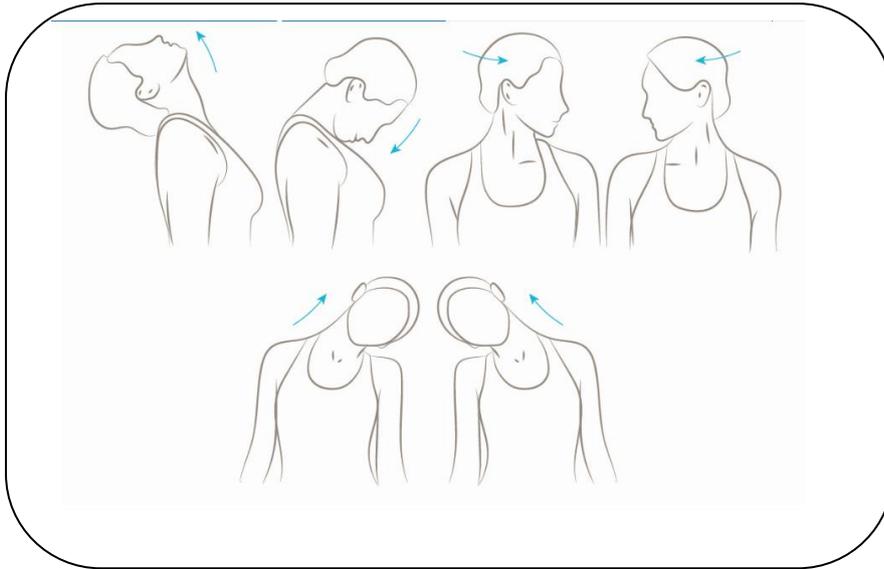
Shoulder rolls

Stand upright with your shoulders and arms relaxed. If able have your arms by your sides without the sling. Squeeze your shoulder blades together and hold for 10 seconds. Repeat this 5 times.



Neck Movements

Both the sling and being in pain can cause tension in the neck muscles in some patients. Try to keep the neck moving with simple movements a few times a day.



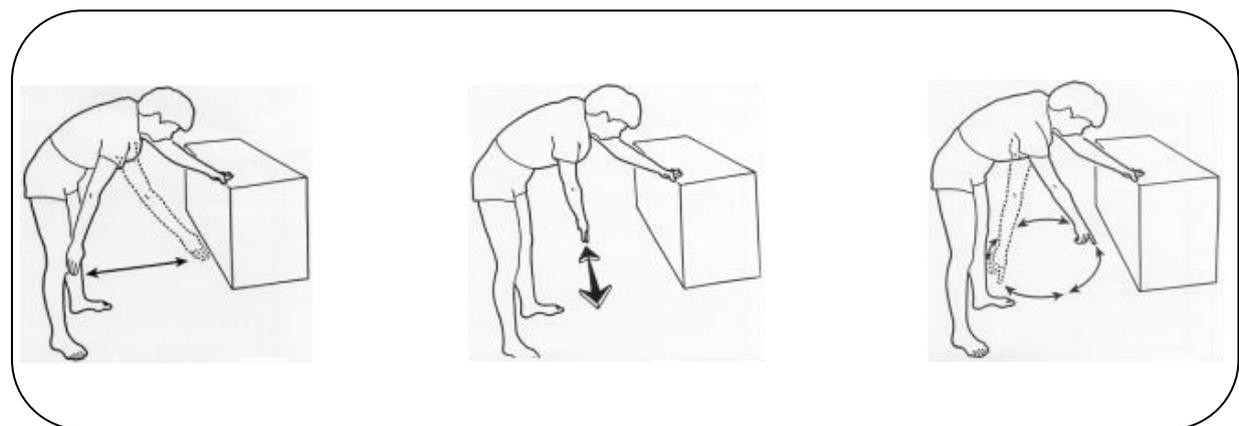
Pendular exercises;

Using a chair or table for support. Hold onto the chair with your uninjured hand, lean forward and gently swing your injured arm backwards and forwards.

Repeat this 10 times in each direction.

Then gently swing your arm side to side. Repeat 10 times in each direction

Next make small circles with your arm in each direction. Repeat 10 times in each direction.



Shoulder- Stage 2

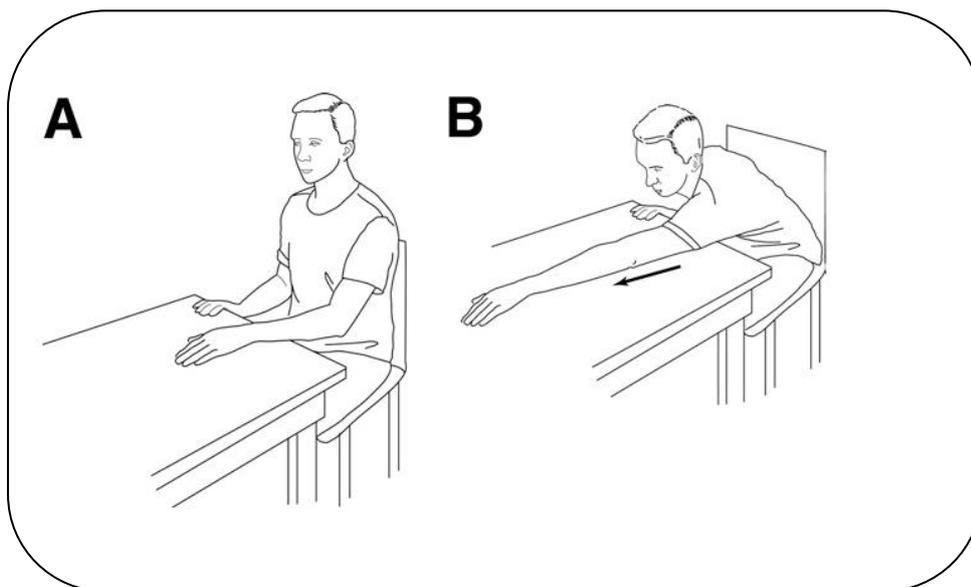
Once you are comfortable performing the previous exercises you can start with the following series of exercises.

Flexion;

Sitting, or standing, with your arm supported on a table (kitchen work surface). Gently move the hand forward, stretching the arm forward. Move into a stretch but not pain. You may find putting a paper towel under your hand helps you to slide your hand. Hold for five seconds.

You can use this type of supported movement to help for hygiene.

Repeat this up to 10 times

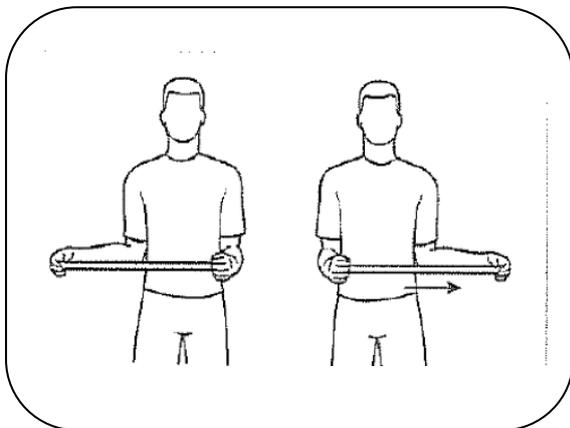


Next lift the arm to the side away from the body using the uninjured arm. Lift as far as you are able and hold for 5 seconds. Gently lower the arm. Repeat 10 times.

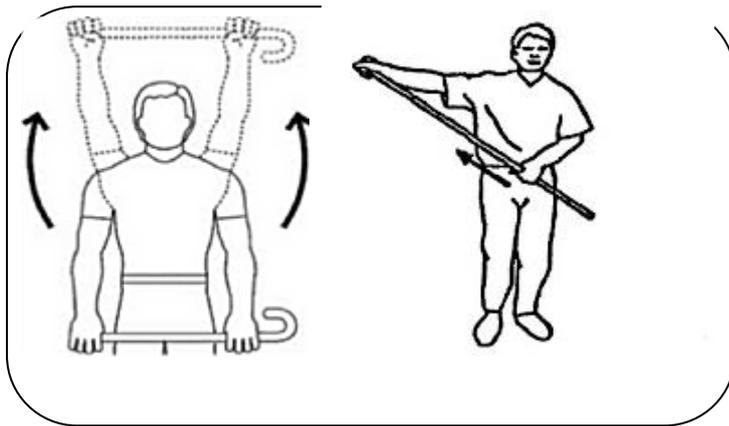


Shoulder Rotation;

Hold your elbow in at your side. Holding onto a stick or similar gently push your hand outwards away from the body keeping your elbow tucked in at your side. When you have reached as far as you are able hold for 5 seconds, then gently return your hand to the centre. Repeat this 10 times.



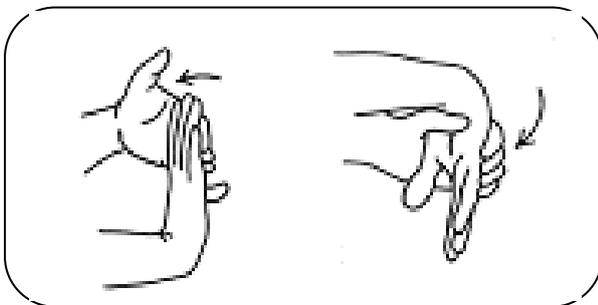
If you are unable to use your uninjured arm for the flexion and abduction exercise you can use a stick to help instead.



As mentioned before it is important from the start of your recovery to ensure that your elbow and wrist does not become stiff from being immobilised in a sling so here are a few exercises to do to prevent this from as soon as you are able. Ideally in the first few days after injury.

Elbow, Wrist and Hand Exercises

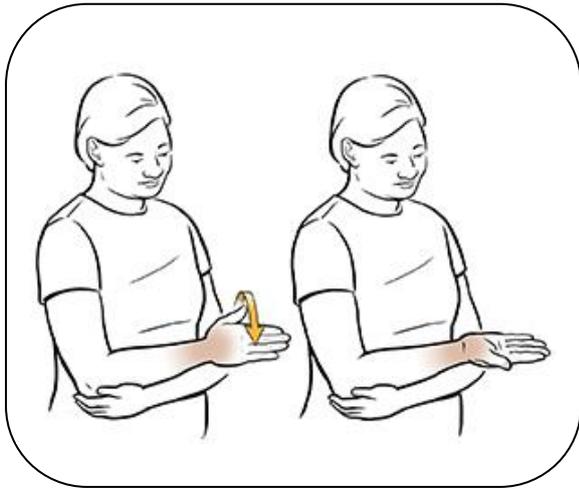
Flexion and extension;



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 (do not cause pain). Hold for 5 seconds.

Repeat each direction 10 times

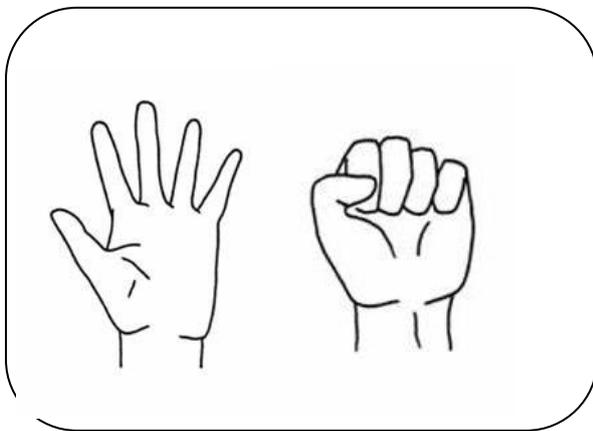
Forearm rotation;



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.

Repeat 10-15 times

Finger flexion and extension;



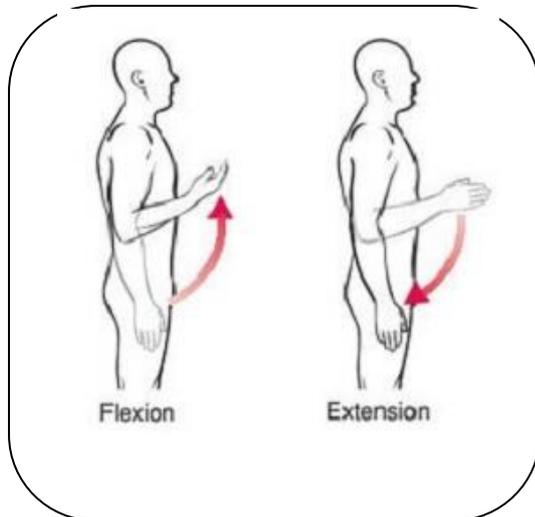
Make a fist with your hand and hold for 5 seconds, release. After a few days you can hold a sponge or a pair of socks in the hand of your injured arm. Squeeze the ball as hard as possible without pain.

Repeat 10 times

Elbow

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

Repeat 10 times



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



Wrist exercises



Elbow exercises



Shoulder exercises

Please scan the QR codes for information and videos online