

# Soft Tissue Injury – Shoulder

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Na żądanie ta ulotka może zostać udostępniona  
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## Information for Patients

This is a follow-up leaflet to your recent telephone consultation with the fracture care team explaining the ongoing management of your injury. Your case has been reviewed by an Orthopaedic Consultant (Bone Specialist) and a Physiotherapist.

### **You have sustained a soft tissue injury to your shoulder.**

This normally takes up to six weeks to heal but you may find strenuous or repetitive overhead activities more difficult for up to 3 months.

During this period, it is important that you follow the rehabilitation plan on the following page. Following your rehabilitation plan will help to prevent further injury and help to improve your function. You may use the arm in the meantime; it is important to keep the shoulder moving to prevent stiffness. Take pain killers as prescribed. Use the sling (if provided) for comfort only, and try to wean out of this as soon as possible. You may find it more comfortable to sleep propped up with pillows.

You can return to driving once your sling has been removed and you feel confident in safely controlling your vehicle.

If you are worried that you are unable to follow the rehabilitation plan, if after two weeks you are not close to achieving full movement in your shoulder or have noticed significant muscle weakness, or if you have any questions, then please contact us for advice using the contact details on the back of this booklet.

## Smoking cessation

Medical evidence suggests that smoking prolongs healing times. In extreme cases it can stop healing altogether. It is important that you consider this information with relation to your recent injury. Stopping smoking during the healing phase of your injury will help ensure optimal recovery from this injury.

For advice on smoking cessation and local support available, please refer to the following website: <http://smokefree.nhs.uk> or discuss this with your GP.

## Management / Rehabilitation Plan

Weeks since Injury	Rehabilitation Plan
0-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wear the sling during the day except for exercises and personal hygiene. You do not need to wear it at night.</li><li>• Start Stage 1 Exercises.</li><li>• Do not do any heavy lifting.</li><li>• Avoid repetitive overhead movements.</li></ul>
2-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gradually discontinue using the sling if you have not already done this.</li><li>• Begin normal light activities with the arm and shoulder.</li><li>• Start Stage 2 Exercises to increase your movement.</li></ul>
4-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The injury should be largely healed.</li><li>• Resume normal activities guided by your pain.</li><li>• Start Stage 3 Exercises at 6 weeks post-injury.</li><li>• Heavy tasks may cause discomfort.</li></ul>
12+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Symptoms will continue to improve over the next few months.</li><li>• If you are still experiencing significant pain and / or stiffness please contact us for further advice / management</li></ul>

## Exercises

### Stage 1 Exercises (3-4 times per day)

#### Elbow bend & straighten

Bend and straighten the elbow of your injured arm so you feel a mild to moderate stretch. You can use your other arm to assist if necessary. Do not push if it causes pain.

Repeat 10 times.



#### Forearm rotations

Rest the elbow of your injured arm by your side. Bend it to 90 degrees. Slowly rotate your palm up and down until you feel a mild to moderate stretch. You can use your other arm to assist if necessary. Do not push if it causes pain.

Repeat 10 times.



#### Wrist flexion and extension

Move your wrist up and down.

Repeat 10 times 10 times.



**Exercises continued on following page**

## Exercises

### Stage 1 Exercises Continued (3-4 times per day)

#### Finger flexion and extension

Open and close your hand of your injured arm as shown 10 times.

After a few days, hold a soft ball/ball of socks. Squeeze the ball as hard as possible without pain. Hold for five seconds.

Repeat 10 times.



#### Postural awareness

Bring your shoulders back and squeeze your shoulder blades together as shown in the picture. Do this with or without your sling on.

Hold the position for 20-30 seconds.

Repeat 5 times.



#### Shoulder pendulum exercises

Stand and lean forwards supporting yourself with the other hand. Try to relax your injured arm and let it hang down.

1. Swing your arm slowly and gently, forwards and backwards.
2. Swing your arm slowly and gently, side to side.
3. Swing your arm slowly and gently, in circles clockwise.

Continue for approximately one to two minutes in total.



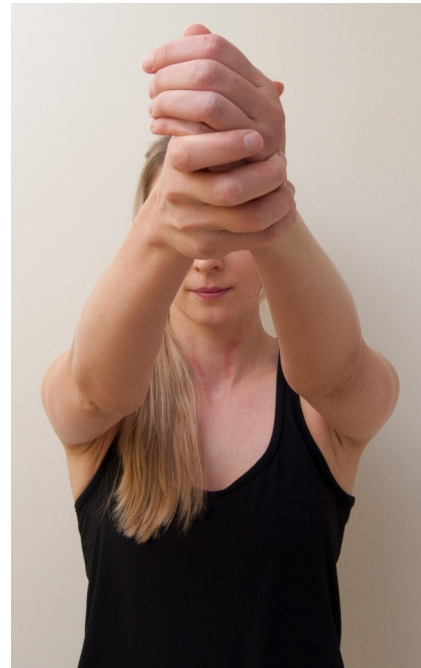
## Exercises

### Stage 2 Exercises (3-4 times per day)

#### Active assisted shoulder flexion

Use your other hand to lift your injured arm up in front of you as shown in the pictures.

Repeat 10 times.



#### Active assisted external rotation

Keep the elbow of your injured arm tucked into your side and your elbow bent. Hold onto a stick/umbrella/golf club or similar. Use your unaffected arm to push your injured hand outwards. Remember to keep your elbow tucked in. Push until you feel a stretch.

If you don't have a stick you could simply hold the injured arm at the wrist and guide it outwards.

Hold for five seconds then return to the starting position.

Repeat 10 times.



## Exercises

### Stage 3 Exercises (3-4 times per day)

When you have regained full range of movement during the above exercises without pain you can start to do the exercises **without** the support of your other hand; this is known as active range of movement.

#### Active forward flexion:

With your thumb facing up, try to move your injured arm up, keeping it close beside your body.

Repeat 10 times.



#### Active abduction:

With your thumb facing up and outwards, try to move your injured arm in a big arc out to the side.

Repeat 10 times.



#### Active External rotation

With your elbow by your side, rotate your forearm outwards away from your body, keeping your elbow bent to about 90 degrees (right angle).

Repeat 10 times.



## Contact Information

**Should you have any worries or concerns following discharge from hospital, please contact either:**

Fracture Clinic: 0151 430 1403 (9 am-5pm Monday to Friday)

Emergency Department: 0151 430 2399

Whiston Hospital  
Warrington Road,  
Prescot, Merseyside, L35 5DR  
Telephone: 0151 426 1600

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