Shoulder injuries: exercise advice

Exercise advice following discharge from hospital with a shoulder injury.

To prevent stiffness in your shoulder and elbow, do the below exercises regularly throughout the day. Start with a few repetitions and increase the number slowly over time.

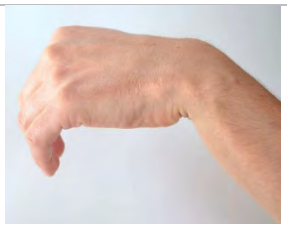
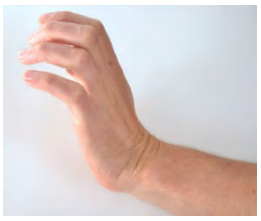
CLINICIANS – please indicate / delete exercises as appropriate

Remember:

- Remove brace / sling before exercising
- Exercise as the pain allows – don't force the movement

Exercises

Postural awareness • Standing or sitting: Pull the shoulder blades gently back and down, with the chest bone (sternum) naturally coming forwards, as if taking a deep breath in.	
• Bend and straighten the elbow fully, using assistance of the good arm if needed.	
• With a bent elbow, turn the forearm over in a clockwise and anti-clockwise direction (palm up, then palm down).	

• Bend the wrist forwards and backwards, then side to side. • Circle the wrist in a clockwise and then an anticlockwise direction. • Squeeze and make a fist. You can use a small ball if you have one.	  
• Standing with your good arm holding onto a chair. • Bend forwards and let your operated arm come away from your body. Slowly move the arm in a ‘pendular’ motion forwards and backwards, left to right and around in circles.	
• Put a cloth or small ball underneath the operated arm (hand). • Gently slide the operated arm away from the body, using the ball to take some weight of the arm and lean your body forward into the table.	 

If you have any worries or concerns following discharge from hospital, please contact: **Fracture Clinic on 0118 322 6567 (12-5pm, Monday to Friday) or mobile: 07554 330 369.**

Useful numbers and contacts

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Orthopaedic Physiotherapy Department
Royal Berkshire Hospital
London Road, Reading RG1 5AN
Tel: 0118 322 7812 / 7811
For questions or concerns please contact: rbft.physiotherapy@nhs.net

Images courtesy of http://simpleset.net

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

RBFT Physiotherapy (Orthopaedic Shoulder Team), November 2026.
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