

Advice for Patients with Shoulder Injuries

This sheet is designed to give you some helpful advice for the next 2-3 weeks on how to manage following your fracture.

ANALGESIA

- Pain is often a big problem initially
- Take your painkillers regularly; don't try to cut down on them too soon.
- See your GP if the analgesics are not strong enough, or do not agree with you.

SLING

- The consultant will request a particular type of sling to be worn.
Wear it for as long as you are instructed
- The hand should be slightly higher than the elbow and the sling may need to be adjusted regularly to keep this position.

SLEEPING

- Keep your sling on at night to avoid unwanted movement.
- It is often more comfortable to sleep sitting up for the first week or so.
- It is usual to have broken sleep in the early stages of healing.

WASHING DRESSING

- Initially you may feel happier with your clothes over the top of your arm- your physiotherapist can guide you as to when you should put the sling on the outside.
- Lean forward and let your arm hang, as in fig 2. for washing and drying.

- In this position, put your injured arm into the sleeve of the garment first.
- It is easier to wear button up shirts or blouses.

EXERCISES

We recommend that in the first couple of weeks you start exercising your elbow only (as shown below) and get into the forward leaning position (fig 2) for washing and dressing twice a day. You may have to do this 30 - 45 minutes after taking some pain relief.



Fig. 1

Elbow Range of Movement

Remove your arm from the sling and bend and straighten the elbow several times

Shoulder Pendular Exercises

Leaning well forward at the waist, using the good arm for support, let your injured arm hang freely. Gently swing forwards and backwards within limits of pain.

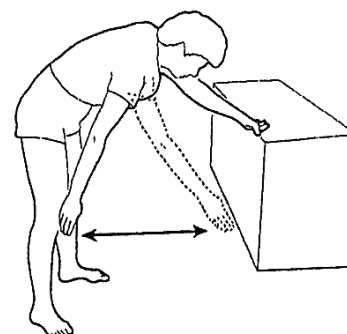


Fig. 2

Shoulder Porridge Stir Exercises

In the same position gently circle arm in both directions, within the limits of pain.

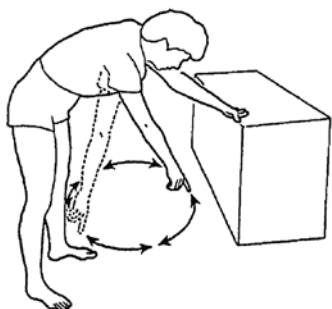


Fig. 3

You may be reviewed by the doctor in fracture clinic at about 3 weeks, and the physiotherapist will advise you on progressing your exercises. He/She will also arrange for follow-up physiotherapy at your local department.

If you are not given a 3 week follow-up, your local physiotherapy should be in contact with an appointment to begin more active exercises.

The Trust cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information given if the leaflet is not used by Royal Devon staff undertaking procedures at the Royal Devon hospitals.

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