



Patient & Family Guide
2021

Exercises After Shoulder Injury



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Exercises After Shoulder Injury

Your injury is now healed well enough that you can do the following exercises without worrying about hurting your shoulder again. You may feel discomfort on the side of your arm instead of over your shoulder – this is normal.

Your arm may have some bruising or swelling. This will get better with time and the exercises will help with healing. If your arm is quite swollen, lie down with your arm propped up on pillows so it is higher than your heart for 30 minutes 2 or 3 times a day.

Comfort measures

Shoulder pain may be worse at night. Try sleeping on your non-injured side with 2 or 3 pillows in front of you. Put your injured arm on the pillows. Remember to put a pillow under your head.



When sitting, try putting 1 or 2 pillows on your lap and resting your elbow on the pillows.



Exercises

Move your arm or shoulder as far as you can without too much discomfort.

Only do the exercises you have been asked to do.

Plan to do your exercises 3 times each day.

□ Exercise 1

Pendular exercise

Stand sideways next to a counter or table. Rest your good forearm on the counter and lean forward. Let your injured arm hang down and try to keep your shoulder as relaxed as possible.

Swing your arm in a circle clockwise and then counterclockwise, repeat _____ times.

Swing it side to side, repeat _____ times.

Swing it forward and back, repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 2

Elbow flexion and extension

While standing or sitting:

Bend and straighten your elbow as far as possible.

Repeat _____ times.



Exercise 3

Wrist flexion and extension



Move your wrist up and down as far as possible.
Repeat _____ times.

Exercise 4



Make a fist and then open your hand as far as possible.
Repeat _____ times.

Assisted movement exercises

Flexion

Exercise 5

Place the hand of your injured arm in your other hand or support your arm by holding your forearm. Bend your elbows. Use your good arm to lift your injured arm up towards the ceiling or as far as possible. Slowly lower using mostly your good arm.

Hold _____. Repeat _____ times.



Exercise 6

Place the hand of your injured arm in your other hand. Use your good arm to lift your injured arm up towards the ceiling, or as far as possible. Slowly lower using mostly your good arm.

Hold _____. Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 7

While lying down:

Hold a stick or cane in front of you with both hands and straighten your elbows. Use your good arm to help lift your injured arm up towards the ceiling, or as far as possible. Slowly lower using mostly your good arm.

Hold _____. Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 8

While standing:

Hold a stick or cane in front of you with both hands. Lift both arms up using your good arm to help lift your injured arm towards the ceiling or as far as possible. Slowly lower using mostly your good arm.

Hold _____. Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 9

While standing:

Place a towel, rope, or belt over an open door. Hold one end in each hand. With your good arm, pull the rope down as far as possible, letting your injured arm lift up. Slowly lower using mostly your good arm.

Hold _____. Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 10

Flexion

Stand facing a door frame. Put the hand of your injured arm on the door frame. “Walk” your fingers up the door frame, moving closer as needed. Gently stretch into the door frame using your body weight. Let your hand slide back down the door frame.

Hold _____. Repeat _____ times.



Abduction

□ Exercise 11

While standing:

Hold a stick or cane in front of you with both hands. Cup the hand of your injured arm over one end. Keep your elbow straight. Push your injured arm out to the side as far as you can using your good arm. Slowly lower using mostly your good arm. Hold _____. Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 12

While lying down:

Hold a stick or cane in front of you with both hands. Cup the hand of your injured arm over one end. Keep your elbow straight. Push your injured arm out to the side as far as you can using your good arm. Slowly lower using mostly your good arm.

Hold _____. Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 13

Place a towel, rope, or belt over an open door. Hold one end in each hand and start with your injured arm out to the side. With your good arm, pull the rope down and towards you as far as possible, letting your injured arm lift out to the side and up. Slowly lower using mostly your good arm. Hold _____. Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 14

Abduction

Stand with the injured side of your body facing the door frame. Put the hand of your injured arm on the door frame. “Walk” your fingers up the door frame, moving closer as needed. Gently stretch into the door frame using your body weight.

Let your hand slide back down the door frame.

Hold _____. Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 15

Extension

Hold a stick or cane behind you with both hands. Lift both arms away from your back as far as you can using your good arm to help lift your injured arm. Slowly lower using mostly your good arm.

Hold _____. Repeat _____ times.



External rotation

□ Exercise 16

While standing:

Hold a stick or cane in front of you with both hands. Keep the elbow on your injured side bent at 90 degrees. Using your good arm, move the stick or cane so that your injured arm rotates away from your body as far as possible. Slowly return to starting position using mostly your good arm. It is important to keep your elbows at your sides. Hold _____. Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 17

While lying down:

Hold a stick or cane in front of you with both hands. Move your injured arm away from your body slightly. Keep the elbow on your injured side on the bed and bent at 90 degrees. Using your good arm, move the stick so that your injured arm rotates away from your body as far as possible. Slowly return to the starting position using mostly your good arm. Hold _____. Repeat _____ times.



Internal rotation

□ Exercise 18

Hold a stick or cane behind your back with both hands. Move the stick across your back as far as possible towards your good side, using your good arm to help move your injured arm. Keep your injured arm close to the small of your back. Slowly return to the starting position using mostly your good arm.

Hold _____. Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 19

Drop a towel over your good shoulder and hold it with the hand of your injured arm.

Hold a towel behind you. The hand of your injured arm should be over your buttock. Pull the towel up with your good hand as far as possible, as if you were drying your back. Your lower arm will move up towards your shoulder blade.

Hold _____. Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 20

Horizontal adduction

Reach across your body with your injured arm as if to touch your opposite shoulder.

Place your good hand on the elbow of your injured arm and try to move your injured arm as close as possible to your chest.

Hold _____. Repeat _____ times.



Isometric strengthening exercises

Isometric exercises make the muscles work without changing their length, so that the joints do not move.

This increases muscle strength. It is important to hold and release the exercise on and off, as it may be painful. Start with a light push and increase over time as you are able.

□ Exercise 21

Abduction

Stand with your injured arm touching the wall and your elbow bent with a small pillow or towel

between your elbow and the wall. Push your elbow sideways against the wall. Hold _____. Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 22

Flexion

Stand facing the wall with the elbow of your injured arm bent. Make a fist and place a pillow between

your fist and the wall. Push your hand forward, tensing the muscle in the front of your shoulder. Hold _____.

Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 23

Extension

Stand with your injured arm touching the wall and your elbow bent with a small pillow or towel between your elbow and the wall. Push the back of your elbow into the wall, tensing the muscle in the back of your shoulder. Hold _____.

Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 24

External rotation

Hold the outside of your injured forearm with your good hand. Push your injured arm away from you while pulling with your good hand. Hold _____. Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 25

Internal rotation

Hold the inside of your injured forearm with your good hand. Push your wrist towards you, while pushing with your good hand. Hold _____. Repeat _____ times.



Active movement exercises

□ Exercise 26

Flexion

While lying down:

Lift your injured arm up as far as you can.

Hold _____. Return your arm to your side.

Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 27

Abduction

Lying on your non-injured side, lift your injured arm up as far as you can.

Hold _____. Return your arm to your side.

Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 28

External rotation

Lying on your non-injured side, bend the elbow of your injured arm to 90 degrees and keep it tucked to your side. Lift your hand towards the ceiling, keeping your elbow tucked to your side.

Do not roll your shoulder backwards.

Hold _____. Return to starting position.

Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 29

Flexion

While standing:

Lift your injured arm up in front of you as far as you can.

Hold _____. Return your arm to your side.

Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 30

Abduction

Lift your injured arm away from your side and overhead as far as you can, leading with your thumb.

Hold _____. Return your arm to your side.

Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 31

Extension

Start with your injured arm by your side. Lift your arm up and back as far as you can.

Hold _____. Return your arm to your side.

Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 32

Scapular retraction

Stand with your elbows bent to 90 degrees and tucked by your sides. Pull your shoulder blades down and in towards your spine. Hold _____. Repeat _____ times.



□ Exercise 33

Scapular retraction

Lie on your stomach with your arms by your sides. Squeeze your shoulder blades together. This will make your arms lift off the bed.

Hold _____.

Repeat _____ times.



