Exercises After Shoulder Injury
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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.

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.
Elbow flexion and extension

While standing or sitting:
Bend and straighten your elbow as far as possible.
Repeat ______ times.
Wrist flexion and extension

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

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

Flexion

1. 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.

2. 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.
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.
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.
Abduction

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.

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.
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

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.

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
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.
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.
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.
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.
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.
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
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.
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.

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.

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.
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.

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.
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

Flexion

While lying down:
Lift your injured arm up as far as you can.
Hold _______. Return your arm to your side.
Repeat ______ times.
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.
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.
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.
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.

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.
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.

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.
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