

## **Advice for Acute Shoulder Injury**

Following injury, your shoulder may be bruised and painful due to sprained muscles, tendons and ligaments.

The following advice may help the natural healing process.

### **During the first 24 hours**

If your shoulder is swollen or bruised, try to rest it at this stage. A sling may be provided or the arm can be supported on a pillow whilst sitting or lying.

Make up an **'ice pack'** using frozen peas or crushed ice cubes wrapped in a wet tea-towel and place it directly on the skin over the affected area for 10 minutes, 3 times a day for the first 5 days.

### **After 24 hours**

It is important to start gently moving the arm to prevent any stiffness. The following exercises will help.

**Do each exercise 5 times every hour.**

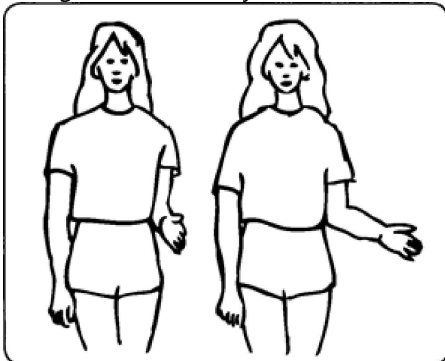
1. Stand beside a table or work surface and lean forwards onto it with your unaffected arm. Allow your injured arm to hang loosely forwards. Slowly swing the arm forward and backward alongside the body. Start with very small movements and gradually move as far as possible.



2. Standing in the same position, gently swing your arm across your body and then out to the side.
3. Either in a sitting or lying position, clasp your hands together and, using the strength of your unaffected arm, lift the injured arm as high as possible (without pain).



4. In a sitting or standing position, bend your elbow to 90° and tuck it in by your waist. Then, with your palm facing inwards, take your hand as far out as possible (keeping the elbow in) - see diagram.



**It is also important to keep full flexibility of the elbow, wrist and hand, by putting each of these joints through their full range of movement 3 times a day.**

It is usual to take 2-3 weeks to settle, and longer before returning to full activity.

**However, if movement, swelling or pain is not improving (or is worsening) within 3-5 days, please contact your GP / 111 (or return to the Emergency Department if severe).**

Do not return to sport until you have a full, comfortable range of movement and normal activity - or as advised by your physiotherapist.

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