

# Following a shoulder injury

Therapy department

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[yeovilhospital.nhs.uk](http://yeovilhospital.nhs.uk)

The logo for Yeovil Hospital Healthcare, featuring a stylized 'Y' inside a circle with a rainbow-colored border.  
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## Anatomy

The shoulder is a ball joint. It is formed from a ball on the top of your arm bone and a shallow socket which is part of the shoulder blade.

The shoulder joint is designed to give a large amount of movement. Ligaments, cartilage and soft tissues surrounding the joint provide its stability. A group of muscles around the shoulder, known as the rotator cuff, control the position of the ball on the socket.

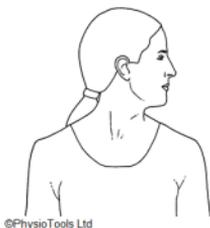
After the original injury has started to heal it is important to begin gently moving the joint to prevent the surrounding structures stiffening up and the muscles becoming weak.

## Exercises

The doctors are now happy for you to start gently moving your shoulder. It is important to preform the following exercises three to four times a day in order for you to heal with maximum flexibility. Slow, controlled exercises are more effective and comfortable than quick movements.

Although the exercises may be hard work, tiring or tight, they should not be painful. If you experience intense or lasting pain (eg. more than 30 minutes) reduce the exercises by doing them less forcefully or less often. If this does not help, please discuss the problem with your physiotherapist.

1. Turn your head to one side.  
**Repeat five times**



2. Tilt your head towards one shoulder.  
**Repeat five times**



Complete exercises 1 & 2 opposite side.

3. Guide your shoulder blades back and down. Hold for ten seconds. Keep your arms relaxed and avoid arching your back.  
**Repeat ten times**

4. Bend and straighten your elbow.  
**Repeat ten times**



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5. With your elbow bent to 90 degrees, turn your palm up to the ceiling and down to the floor.  
**Repeat ten times**



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6. Create a circle with the wrist.  
**Repeat five times in each direction**

7. Open and close the hand as if making a fist.  
**Repeat ten times**

8. Sitting or standing. Cradle the painful arm with the good arm so it is supported. Gently lean forwards so the arm comes away from your body.  
**Repeat ten times**



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## Cold treatment

To reduce the pain and swelling in your shoulder apply a pack of frozen peas, wrapped in a damp towel. Remove after 15-20 minutes. You can apply every two hours as required. Remove the ice if you experience excessive discomfort.

## Posture

It is important to maintain a good posture as the sling can pull your shoulder and neck forwards. This can cause the soft tissues to become stiff. Maintaining a good posture with your shoulder blades down will help to prevent this.

## Removing your sling

Remove your arm from the sling to complete the exercises. Your consultant or physiotherapist will guide you as to when to wean yourself out of your sling during the day and at night.

## Driving

You will be advised by your consultant or physiotherapist when it is safe for you to drive again. The standard required would be able to swerve safely from an oncoming object and use the instruments effectively.

## For more information

The Therapy Department is open  
Monday to Friday 8am till 5pm

If you have any questions or require  
further information or advice, please  
contact:

**Therapy Department: 01935 384358**

**Therapy Fax: 01935 384358**

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in another format, eg.  
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