

Sports Therapy
Manual Therapy
Electrotherapy
Manipulation
Rehabilitation
Pre-habilitation
Clinical Pilates
Pre-Season Screening
Exercise Prescription
Massage

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AUSTRALIAN
PHYSIOTHERAPY
ASSOCIATION

Member

POST-OPERATIVE PHYSIOTHERAPY INFORMATION

Total Shoulder Joint Replacement/Resurfacing

Use of Sling:

The sling may be required to rest and support the shoulder for a period of 4-6 weeks following surgery. During this time you must remove your arm from the sling 4-5 times per day to perform the following exercises as demonstrated by your physiotherapist. You may like to use the sling for a little while longer whilst in crowds if your shoulder remains painful as a “warning sign” for others to keep clear!

Precautions.

★ **No active lifting/ movements of your operated arm for 6 weeks.** Due to the surgical approach to the shoulder, your deltoid muscle is detached and needs time to heal after your surgeon sutures back to the bone.

The replaced shoulder also needs time to heal into the bone and the ligaments strengthen. The following exercises prescribed by your physiotherapist are safe to perform during this period and help prevent your shoulder stiffening/ freezing up too much.

1.Elbow, Wrist and Hand Movements – Day 1 onwards

Be sure to keep the elbow, wrist and hand mobile by bending and straightening all joints. It is much easier to keep these joints moving now than to let them get stiff. You can also begin gripping a rolled towel or tennis ball to keep your arm muscles strong and begin activity around the shoulder.

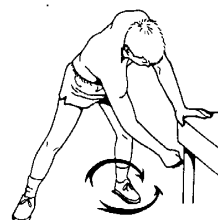
2. Shoulder (scapula) retraction – Day 1 onwards

Pull shoulder blades back gently and pinch them together. Keep shoulders down away from ears. Hold for 5 seconds and repeat 10 times.



2.Pendular Swings - Day 1/2 onwards

Stand beside a table/ bench and support yourself firmly with your uninjured arm. Bend forward from the hips to allow your injured arm to hang free. Swing the arm gently forward/ backwards, side to side and in circles for 2-3 minutes.



4. Passive Shoulder Flexion – Day 2 onwards

Cradle your operated arm in your uninjured arm. Using your uninjured arm to take all the weight, raise your arms together to the front (flexion). Try not to let the point of your shoulder move upwards too far towards your ear – you can check this by doing this exercise initially in front of a mirror.

Standing

Lying on Back



Note: Move only to the point of pain, and do not let your operated arm contribute to the movement for 4 weeks in order to protect the healing tendons.

Variations – This exercise can be performed whilst sitting on a high backed chair or whilst lying on your back to help stabilise your shoulder blade during the movement.

4-6 weeks

Intermittent use of sling as comfort allows you. You may find it necessary towards the end of the day as you get tired, and especially whilst in crowded areas.

Continue with exercises as above. You may commence gentle formal physiotherapy treatment in this time if your surgeon allows, however it most commonly begins after 6 weeks.

Further Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation

The shoulder is a very complex joint which requires excellent muscle function to achieve full, pain free movement. The joint itself is very unstable without strong muscles, and has been likened to a golf ball sitting on a horizontal golf tee! Therefore, you will generally be required to attend further physiotherapy for a progressive regime of exercises to help strengthen and mobilise your shoulder. Your surgeon will advise you as to when you should begin your further rehabilitation. This is generally from 6 weeks onwards, however some very gently physiotherapy may be commenced from 4 weeks post-operatively if your surgeon approves.