

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

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## POST-OPERATIVE PHYSIOTHERAPY INFORMATION

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## Rotator Cuff Repair – Mr. Richard Dallalana

### Use of Sling:

The sling may be required to rest and support the shoulder for a period of 4-6 weeks following surgery, or until advised by your surgeon. During this time, you must remove your arm from the sling 3-4 times per day to perform the exercises below as demonstrated by your physiotherapist. The sling may be removed when resting in bed/sleeping. Pillows provide good support and comfort for the shoulder whilst sleeping. You may also 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.

Although there are only small puncture marks seen on the surface following your surgery, it is very important to understand that inside the shoulder the repaired tendons need **time to heal** and strengthen following surgery. The following exercises prescribed by your physiotherapist are safe to perform during this period and help prevent your shoulder stiffening/ freezing up too much.

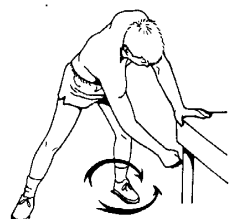
**EXERCISES:** The following exercises are to be performed 3-4 times each day. They will prevent stiffness about the arm and shoulder joints in the time while you are wearing your sling. Do not push any of the exercises to the point of pain.

### 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. Keep your palm facing backwards to protect your shoulder whilst moving your elbow. It is much easier to keep these joints moving now than to let them get stiff. You can also begin gripping a stress ball or squash ball to keep your arm muscles strong and begin activity around the shoulder.

### 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 10 times, side to side 10 times and in circles 10 times. Always keep your palm facing backwards to avoid stressing the shoulder site.



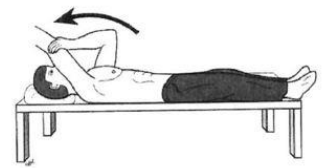
### **3. Shoulder (scapula) retraction – Day 1 onwards**

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



### **4. Passive Shoulder Flexion – Day 2 onwards**

Lying on your back, 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 should only elevate your arm to 90° (shoulder height) unless directed by your surgeon/physiotherapist.



Note: Move only to the point of pain, and do not let your operated arm contribute to the movement for 6 weeks in order to protect the healing tendons unless otherwise advised by your surgeon.

### **4-6 weeks**

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.

### **Dressings:**

Your wounds are covered by waterproof dressings prior to being discharged from hospital. They are fine to shower with, but cannot be immersed in water. You need to leave these dressings on until your review with your surgeon.

### **Pain:**

All exercises should be done within limits of tolerable pain. Do not push into excessive pain or where pain is greatly increased post exercise.

### **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.