

Shoulder injury – soft tissue and fracture

Emergency Department Patient Information Leaflet

Introduction

This leaflet is for people who have a shoulder injury. It includes information about what a shoulder injury is, how it is treated and what to do when you get home.

What is a shoulder injury?

You have been diagnosed with either a soft tissue injury of your shoulder, or a broken bone or fracture of your shoulder.

A soft tissue injury means that you have injured a non-bony part of your shoulder, including muscles, tendons or ligaments. This can be a simple or complex injury. The clinician managing your case will explain your injury to you. Most soft tissue injuries of the shoulder will resolve well with some simple advice.

A fracture or broken bone in the shoulder joint may be a relatively minor or a complex injury. The clinician managing your case will explain your injury to you.

How is it treated?

To relieve the pain, take painkillers such as ibuprofen or paracetamol, if you can take them (always read label; do not exceed the recommended dose). You can also use an ice pack or a bag of frozen vegetables wrapped in a towel, to reduce inflammation.

Avoid activities that may make your symptoms worse.

Exercise

This is for a soft tissue injury to the shoulder. If your consultant or the emergency department healthcare practitioner is happy for you to exercise your shoulder, please complete the following exercises, within comfort.

1. Pendular exercises

Lean onto a table with your good arm, letting your affected arm dangle forwards in front of you. Hold some form of weight to distract from the shoulder.

Using gentle movements of the body, let this arm swing backwards, forwards, side to side, and in circles.

The more you lean your body forwards, the more you will exercise the arm.



2. AAROM shoulder flexion in supine (long lever)

Lie on your back with your arms resting on your stomach.

Interlock your fingers and then use your unaffected arm to lift your affected arm towards the ceiling whilst keeping your elbows straight.

Continue this movement towards the floor behind you ensuring the weight of your affected arm is supported.

Hold this position.

Return to the start position and repeat.



3. Isometric GHjt ER(N) in stand

Stand straight with the elbow on your affected arm bent to 90 degrees.

Place your other hand on the outside of your affected wrist.

Keeping your body still, push your wrist outwards into your good hand, resisting the movement.

Make sure you are trying to rotate the arm outwards, and not trying to push outwards with your elbow.

Hold this position.



4. Isometric GHjt flexion (wall)

Stand up straight facing a wall.

You may want to do this exercise with your elbow bent.

Make a fist with your hand and press your fist into the wall, ensuring the movement comes from your shoulder and not your wrist or elbow.

Hold this position, with your gaze directly ahead, your neck long and your shoulder blades back and down.

Images and information taken from Physitrack®

If you sleep on your side, you should:

- Make sure that your head and neck are in line with the rest of your spine.
- Use enough pillows to keep your head straight:
 - Your head will be pushed up if your pillows are too thick.
 - Your head will drop down if your pillows are too narrow.
- Keep the arm that you are lying on in front of you.

If you sleep on your back, you should:

- Put a rolled-up towel at the back of your neck at night. It might help you to feel more comfortable.

Follow-up care

The healthcare practitioner caring for you will let you know if we need to review you.

Depending on your shoulder injury, you may need further treatment, such as:

- Physiotherapy.
- Injections of corticosteroids – a type of medication used to reduce inflammation.
- Surgery (in some cases).

The healthcare practitioner caring for you will discuss this with you. In most cases, shoulder injuries improve in time if treatment advice is followed. If you need a review, we will give you an appointment which will take place in the Emergency Department, or the Fracture Clinic in the north wing of the hospital.

Alternatively, we may refer you to the Virtual Fracture Clinic who will contact you. At the appointment, a senior doctor will review your injury.



If you need physiotherapy treatment, we will refer you to our Therapy Team. If you have queries when you get home, please contact your GP or NHS 111.

Can I find out more?

You can find out more from the following weblink:

NHS Choices

<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/shoulderpain/Pages/introduction.aspx>

If you have any questions, or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet, please speak to one of our nurses. If you need help when you return home, please contact your GP.

This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:

<http://dgft.nhs.uk/services-and-wards/accident-emergency/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email dgft.patient.information@nhs.net

This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.

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此宣传单可提供大字版本、音频版本和其它语言版本，请拨打电话：0800 073 0510。

Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

ਇਹ ਪਰਚਾ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ, ਬੋਲ ਕੇ ਰੀਕਾਰਡ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਦੂਸਰੀਆਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ, 0800 073 0510 ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜੀ।

Aceasta broșura poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru vă rugăm sunați la 0800 073 0510.

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