

### When can I start?

Light work (*no lifting*) – 6 weeks +

Medium work (*light lifting below shoulder level*) – 12 weeks

Heavy work (*above shoulder level or heavy lifting below shoulder level*) – 3-6 months

Driving – discuss with your consultant.

Please bring a vest top to all of your follow up physiotherapy appointments.

### Useful website:

[www.shoulderdoc.co.uk](http://www.shoulderdoc.co.uk)

DATE : ..... TIME : .....

PHYSIOTHERAPIST : .....

If you have any questions regarding any of the advice included in this leaflet please do not hesitate to contact the physiotherapy department on **0114 263 2112**

For advice on how long to wear your stockings please contact the nursing staff on **0114 263 2176**



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# Rotator Cuff Repair

## Physiotherapy Advice



Part of Aspen Healthcare  
[www.aspen-healthcare.co.uk](http://www.aspen-healthcare.co.uk)

### What have I had done?

The rotator cuff is a group of muscles around the shoulder which stabilise the arm in the shoulder socket. These muscles can become damaged through wear and tear or damaged following an injury such as a fall. The tear has now been repaired and fixed to the top of the arm bone again. The repaired muscle takes several months to fully heal and up to a year to fully strengthen. A polysling will be required to be worn at all times, for the length of time advised by your consultant.

### Will I experience pain?

You are likely to experience pain in the shoulder and in the upper arm in the first 12 weeks. The pain may be worsened on activity, which is normal. You will be prescribed pain relief to take home, this is to be used to ensure you can meet all recovery goals. **If you find your medication is not managing your pain well, it is important to visit your GP to review the pain relief to avoid falling behind schedule with your rehabilitation.**

### What should I avoid?

- ✗ Lifting anything for the duration of wearing the sling
- ✗ Avoid any excessive manual work e.g. heavy lifting/gardening for at least 12 weeks
- ✗ Taking your arm out of the sling for reasons other than doing the exercises or washing/dressing.

### What can I do to help myself? **Take pain relief as advised by nursing staff.**

- ✓ Straighten and bend the elbow several times with arm supported, as well as keeping the neck, wrist and hand mobile. Squeeze your fists with 10 second holds throughout the day
- ✓ Apply ice in a damp pillow case/tea towel to the shoulder for 15 minutes max (before, during or after exercises), ideally 3-5 times a day
- ✓ Sleep on your back, using pillows to support the arm in the sling for comfort
- ✓ Keep your armpit clean and dry.

### What exercises can I do?

In addition to the exercises mentioned above, there are 3 more exercises. Aim to perform the exercises 3 times a day, increase sets and repetitions as comfort allows. **Try to keep your operated arm as relaxed as possible throughout the following exercises. Start your exercises when the nerve block wears off.**

### External Rotation

With your elbow resting on a table, rotate your forearm outwards with a stick out to approximately 20 degrees.

*Hold 2 seconds, 5 times.*



### Abduction

In standing, place your operated hand on a high table. Move away from the table to allow your shoulder to move out to the side (abduct). Ensure that you have a good grip on the table and do not let your arm drop. **Do not start this exercise until nerve block has worn off.**

Do not take the arm past 90 degrees.

*Hold 2 seconds, 5 times.*

Take care when returning arm to neutral position.



### Forward Flexion

Using a towel under your hands to reduce friction, gently slide your hands forwards on a table. Ensure you retain control throughout this exercise and avoid leaning too far forwards.

*Hold 2 seconds, 5 times.*

Take care when returning arm to neutral position.

*\*This exercise can also be done similarly to the abduction exercise above by facing a high surface, holding on with both hands and then stepping away and leaning your trunk forwards\**

