

You have a

## Soft tissue shoulder injury

This is a sprain to your shoulder.

### Healing:

It normally takes 6 weeks to heal, but symptoms can continue for 3 months.

### Pain and swelling:

Your shoulder may be swollen and you will have some pain. Taking pain medication as prescribed and using ice or cold packs will help. More information is on the next page.



### Wearing your sling:

Your sling can be worn for comfort. You can take it off to wash, dress and exercise. It does not need to be worn at night. You should stop using your sling as soon as possible.



### Exercise and activity:

It is important to keep your shoulder moving to prevent stiffness. You will find pictures and instructions for your exercises below.

### Follow up:

You will see a shoulder specialist 1-2 weeks after your injury. The specialist will assess your shoulder, including your rotator cuff. The rotator cuff is a group of muscles around the shoulder that can be damaged during an injury. The specialist will explain your injury and your follow up care. If you have not received your appointment letter within 1 week, please contact us.

### Contact us

If you are concerned about your symptoms, are unable to follow this rehabilitation plan or notice pain other than at your shoulder, please contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic.

**Wear your sling for comfort.** Try to stop using your sling as soon as possible. You can remove the sling for washing, dressing and to do your exercises. You do not need to wear your sling at night.

### **Managing your pain and swelling**

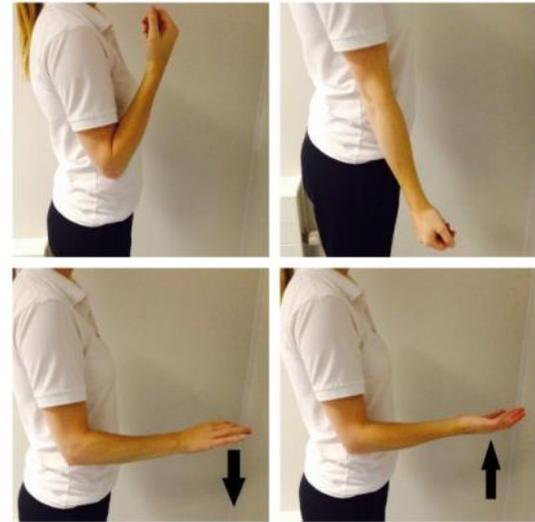
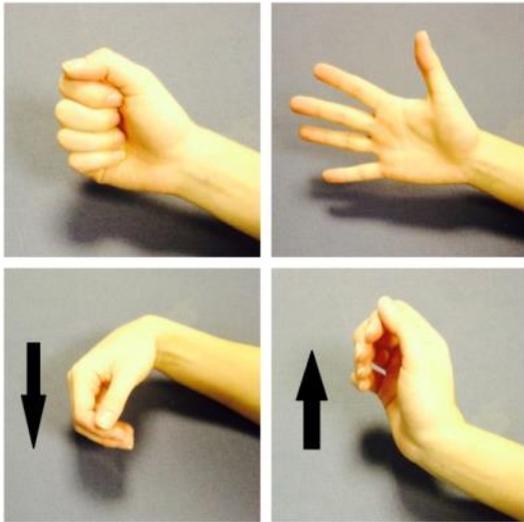
A cold pack can provide short term pain relief. You can use an ice pack or bag of frozen peas wrapped in a damp towel. Put this on your shoulder for up to 15 minutes every few hours. Make sure the ice is not in direct contact with your skin.

### **Activity and Exercise**

You can return to activity when you feel ready. Start with light tasks and be guided by your pain. Regular exercise will prevent stiffness and improve your movement. Start with Stage 1 Exercises. As soon as you feel ready you can progress to the next stages.

Hand, wrist and elbow exercises are only needed while you are wearing a sling. You can stop these once they become easy and you have full movement. Try to do these exercises 4-5 times a day. Repeat each exercise 10 times.

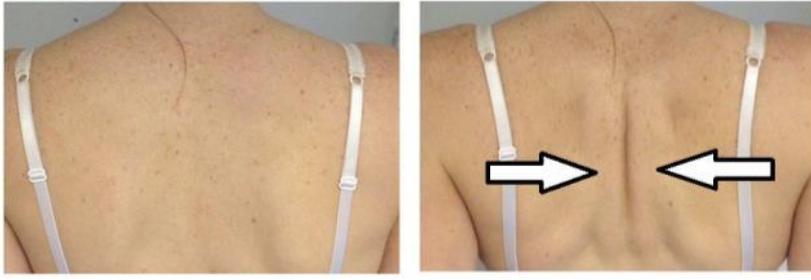
### Hand, wrist and elbow exercises:



1. Open and close your hand. Next, move your wrist up and down. Repeat 10 times.
2. After a few days, hold a soft ball or rolled up socks. Squeeze the ball and hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 5 times.

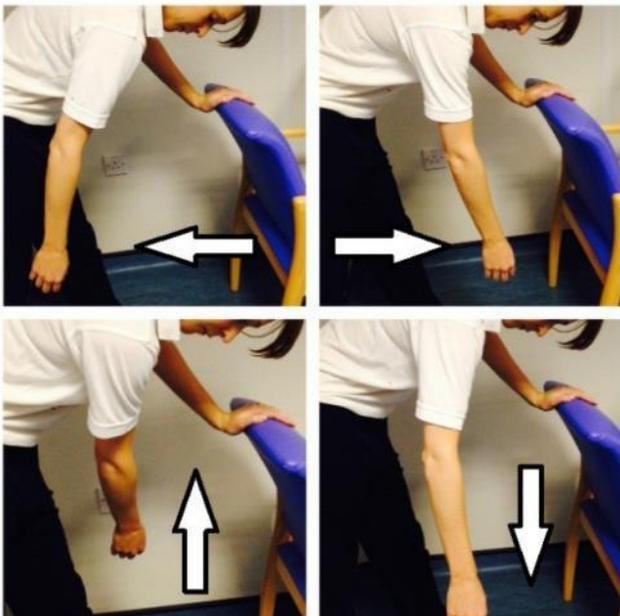
3. Bend and straighten your elbow. Repeat 10 times.
4. Bend your elbow to a right angle. Slowly turn your palm up to the ceiling and down to the ground. Repeat 10 times.

## Posture Exercise:



Bring your shoulders back and gently squeeze your shoulder blades together. Hold for 20-30 seconds. Repeat 5 times.

## Shoulder Pendulum Exercise:



Stand next to a firm surface. Support yourself with your un-injured arm and lean forwards. Let your injured arm relax and hang down to the ground.

Gently swing your arm, making a small movement. Try to do this forward and backward, side to side and in small circles.

Aim to do this for 1-2 minutes in total. You do not need to push into pain. Remember to keep your arm relaxed.

You can start these exercises as soon as you are able to. Try to do these exercises 4-5 times a day. Repeat each exercise 10 times.

### Exercise 1 – Active Assisted Flexion

Use your other hand to lift your arm in front of you, as shown in these pictures.

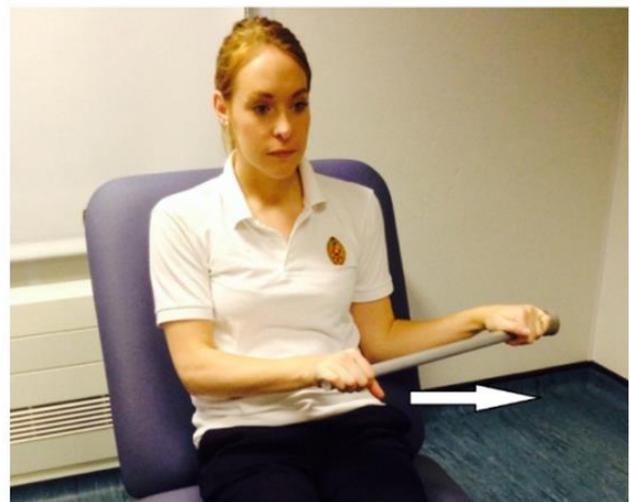


### Exercise 2 – Active Assisted External Rotation

Keep the elbow of your injured arm tucked into your side and your elbow bent. Hold onto a stick, umbrella or something similar.

Use your good arm to push your injured hand outwards. Remember to keep your elbow tucked in.

If you don't have a stick, hold your injured arm at the wrist and guide it outwards with your good hand.

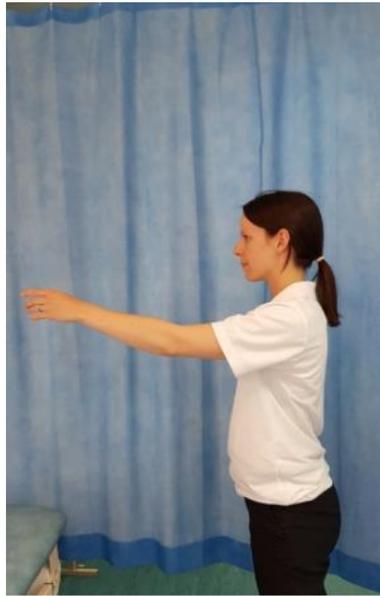


You can start these exercises as soon as you are able to do Stage 2 Exercises comfortably. Try to do these exercises 4-5 times a day. Repeat each exercise 10 times.

### Exercise 1 – Active Flexion

Lift your arm forwards in front of you. Try to raise the arm as high as you can. You do not need to push into pain.

If this is too difficult, try the same movement with a bent arm.



### Exercise 2 – Active Abduction

With your palm facing forwards, move your arm out to the side in a big arc. Try to raise the arm as high as you can. You do not need to push into pain.

If this is too difficult, try the same movement with a bent arm.



### Exercise 3 – Active External Rotation

Start with your elbow bent by your side. Move your forearm out to the side, keeping your elbow bent and near your waist.



### **When can I start driving?**

You can return to driving when:

- You are no longer using your sling,
- You can move comfortably and
- You can control the vehicle safely.

Always test your ability to drive in a safe environment first.

### **How can I get a certificate for work?**

You can get a fitness for work statement from your GP

### **How do I contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic?**

Call 01273 696955 extension 63428.

Email [uhsussex.fracturecare@nhs.net](mailto:uhsussex.fracturecare@nhs.net)