

FROZEN SHOULDER

ADHESIVE CAPSULITIS

These are terms used to describe stiffness of the tissues around the shoulder. This stiffness occurs when the shoulder does not go through its natural range of motion for a period of time (anything more than a few weeks). It frequently starts after some type of shoulder injury that makes it painful to continue to move the shoulder (usually the injury itself does not limit the motion). As the tissues around the shoulder gradually become stiffer, motion becomes more and more difficult. This starts a vicious cycle as the tissue becomes increasingly stiff.

The way to beat this condition is to gradually stretch the stiffened tissues. Initially, this is an uncomfortable process. Over time however, as the tissues start regaining their flexibility, pain begins to decrease and the motion gradually improves.

Occasionally, surgical release or manipulation under anesthesia is used to forcibly stretch or cut the tissue to regain motion. Although this can sometimes be helpful, it does cause tissue injury and pain which can ultimately result in recurrence of some of the stiffness. Therefore, doing gentle stretching exercises such as these, is usually the way to go.

Shoulder EXERCISES

RANGE OF MOTION



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POST SURGERY/INJURY INSTRUCTIONS

Preventing stiffness after shoulder surgery or any type of injury is important.

Any joint that is not moved (whether it is injured or not) will gradually get stiff. To keep the rest of your arm from “seizing up” while your shoulder heals, we suggest:

Hand Movement

1 Wiggle your fingers including opening your hand and spreading your fingers wide, then squeezing them into a clenched fist. **Repeat at least 5 times every hour**, or as often as you think of it.

Elbow Movement

2 Slide the sling back behind your elbow and allow your elbow to straighten out fully. *Hold out straight for a count of 15. Repeat 5 times.*

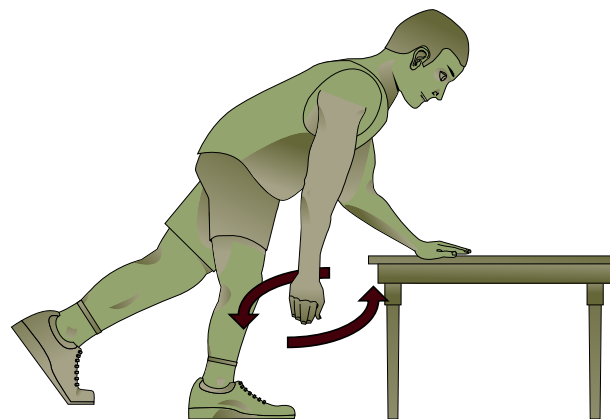
Do this at least 5 times a day (more frequently after the sling is removed.)

RANGE OF MOTION SHOULDER EXERCISES

A. Pendulum Exercises

These are done by leaning forward and supporting your weight on a counter with your opposite arm and allowing your involved arm to hang down. As the shoulder heals and becomes more comfortable, you can begin swinging it in a circle.

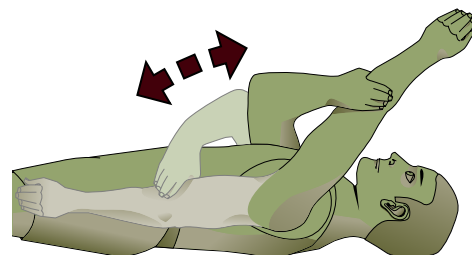
Go around 10 times clockwise, and 10 times counter-clockwise. **Repeat once every waking hour.** As this gets easier to do lean over further and increase the size of the circle.



B. Supine Forward Elevation

While lying on your back, use your opposite hand to grasp your involved arm and gently help it up overhead as far as it will go. *Hold for 15 seconds.* Then return it back beside your body. **Repeat 3 times.**

Do at least 3 times a day.



C. Wall Climbing

Use the fingers of your involved hand to climb gradually up the wall in front of you as far as it will go. If needed, you can use your opposite arm to support and assist your involved shoulder.

Repeat 3 times.

Do at least 3 times a day.



D. Assisted Internal Rotation

While standing – grasp the wrist of your involved arm with your opposite hand behind your back and slide your hands gently upward. If your hands do not reach, you can use a small towel or cloth. *Hold for a count of 15 seconds.*

