Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust
Physiotherapy Department

Pendular exercises for the shoulder
Information for patients
Following injury to your shoulder it may be necessary to rest your arm for short periods e.g. in a sling. However, it is important that your shoulder should not be allowed to ‘stiffen’.

The following exercises should help with regaining normal movements of your shoulder as quickly as possible.

Stand beside a firm support e.g. a table or kitchen work surface and lean onto it with your unaffected arm. Stoop forward as far as possible, letting your affected arm hang loosely down from your body. Swing your arm gently in the following directions:

a) Forwards and backwards

b) Side to side
c) In circles, clockwise then anti-clockwise

Further advice:
• Check that your elbow bends and straightens fully and also that your wrist and hand move fully. These can become stiff if your arm is not being used normally.

• To start with you should not try to lift heavy objects. It is best to gradually increase the weight you lift when advised by your physiotherapist.

• Remember when dressing it is much easier to put your affected arm into the sleeve first.
How to contact us

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