



**The Dudley Group**  
NHS Foundation Trust

Virtual Fracture Clinic  
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This is a follow-up letter to your recent consultation with the Fracture Care Team explaining the ongoing management of your injury. Your case has been reviewed by an Orthopaedic Consultant (Bone Specialist).

**You have sustained a minimally displaced fracture to your greater tuberosity of your shoulder.**

The shoulder is a ball and socket joint. You have fractured the outside of the ball part. The shoulder joint does not respond well to being injured and longstanding stiffness is often inevitable.

**Healing:** The fracture usually heals within 6-8 weeks however pain and stiffness may take a lot longer (up to 4-6 months) to improve. You will be referred to a physiotherapist who will help you with your exercises and movements during this time

**Pain:** Take pain killers as prescribed.  
You may find it more comfortable to sleep propped up with pillows.

**Using your arm:** It is important to keep the shoulder moving to prevent stiffness but not to aggravate it. Follow the management plan below.

**Follow up:** The fracture is in a good position and only has a small chance of moving. You will be seen in fracture clinic 1-2 weeks after your injury. You will have another x-ray and they will assess your shoulder and guide the next stage of your rehabilitation. If you have not received this appointment within one week of receipt of this letter please contact fracture clinic on 01384456111 ext. 2220

### Area of injury:



If you are worried that you are unable to follow this rehabilitation plan, or have any questions, then please phone the Fracture Care Team for advice. **Or**, if you are experiencing pain or symptoms, other than at the site of the original injury or surrounding area, please get in touch using the telephone or e-mail details at the top of this letter.

### Please follow the management plan below

#### What to expect:

| Weeks since injury | Rehabilitation plan  |
|--------------------|--|
| 0-4                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Wear the sling all the time – even in bed at night.</li> <li>✓ Remove the sling for personal hygiene and exercises every day.</li> <li>✓ Start stage 1 exercises straight away, ideally within the first 72 hours. It may take a few days of practice to become comfortable with the pendulum exercises.</li> <li>✓ You will have an appointment with the shoulder specialist.</li> </ul> |
| 4-6                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Continue to wear the sling</li> <li>✓ You will be guided by a physiotherapist about progressions of your exercises.</li> <li>✗ Do not lift your elbow above shoulder height as this may cause pain.</li> </ul>  |
| 6 -12              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The fracture is largely healed.</li> <li>✓ Try not to use the sling.</li> <li>✓ Begin normal light activities with the arm and shoulder.</li> <li>✓ Increase movement as guided by your physiotherapist.</li> <li>✓ Increase your day to day activities.</li> <li>✗ Heavy tasks may cause discomfort.</li> <li>✓ Start to lift your arm overhead if possible.</li> </ul>                  |

#### Advice for a new injury:

**Cold packs:** A cold pack (ice pack or frozen peas wrapped in a damp towel) can provide short term pain relief. Apply this to the sore area for up to 15 minutes, every few hours ensuring the ice is never in direct contact with the skin.

**Rest:** Try to rest your shoulder for the first 24-72 hours. However, it is important to maintain movement. Gently move your shoulder following the exercises shown. These should not

cause too much pain. This will ensure your shoulder does not become stiff and it will help the healing process.

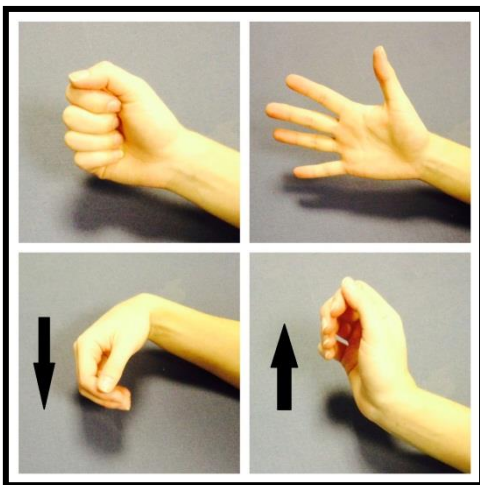
**Smoking advice:** Medical evidence suggests that smoking prolongs fracture healing time. In extreme cases it can stop healing altogether. It is important that you consider this information with relation to your recent injury. Stopping smoking during the healing phase of your fracture will help ensure optimal recovery from this injury. For advice on smoking cessation and local support available, please refer to the following website: <http://smokefree.nhs.uk> or discuss this with your GP.

## Exercises

### Stage 1 (Exercises 1-5)

The use of a sling is important to protect your shoulder whilst it is healing. However, it can often make other joints that have not been injured stiff. Regularly moving the elbow, neck, wrist and hand reduces stiffness in these joints. They should be done regularly throughout the day. The pendulum exercise is your first and most basic exercise specifically targeting early movement of shoulder.

#### Initial exercises to do 4-5 times a day:

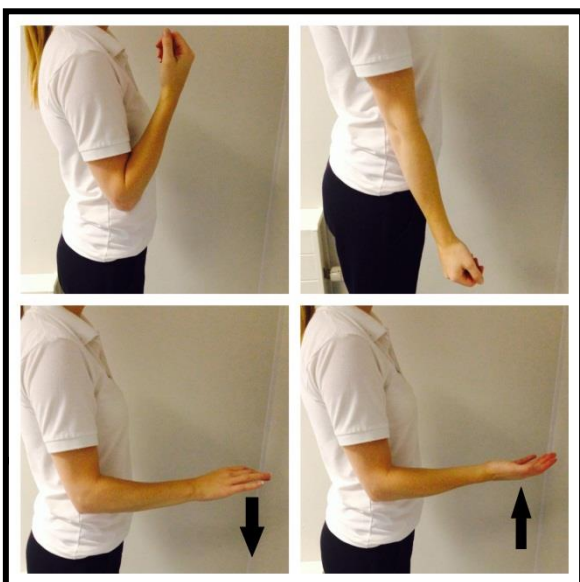


#### 1. Finger and wrist flexion and extension

Open and close your hand as shown 10-15 times. Then move your wrist up and down 10-15 times.

After a few days, hold a soft ball or a ball of socks. Squeeze the ball as hard as possible without pain.

**Hold for 5 seconds and repeat 10-15 times. 4-5 times per day.**



#### 2. Elbow bend to straighten

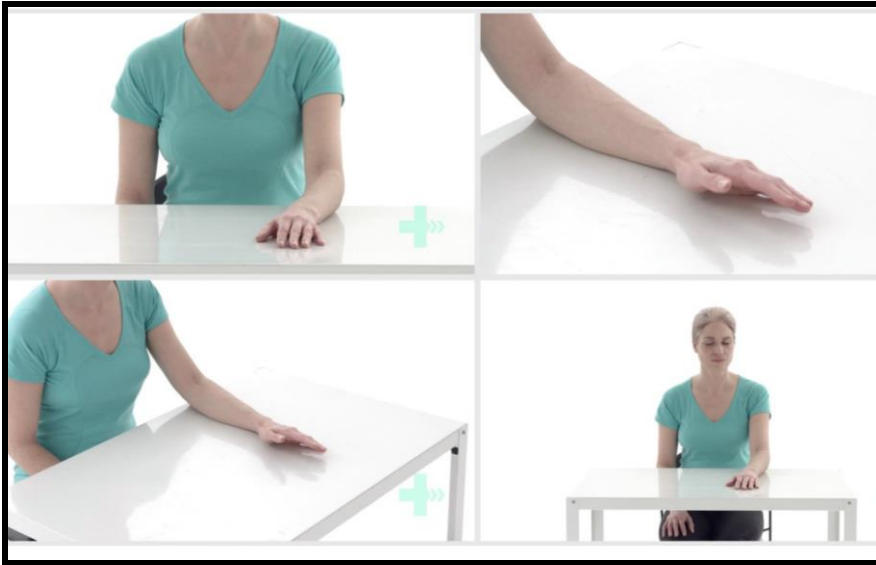
Bend and straighten your elbow so you feel a mild to moderate stretch. You can use your other arm to assist if necessary. Do not push into pain.

**Repeat 10-15 times 4-5 times per day.** This may feel tight and stiff, but this should not increase your pain.

#### 3. Forearm rotations

Put your elbow at your side/ or rest it on a table. Bend elbow to 90 degrees. Slowly rotate your

palm up and down until you feel a mild to moderate stretch. You can use your other arm to assist if necessary. Do not push into pain.



**Repeat 10-15 times 4-5 times per day.** This may feel tight and stiff, but this should not increase your pain.



#### 4. Neck Range of movement exercises

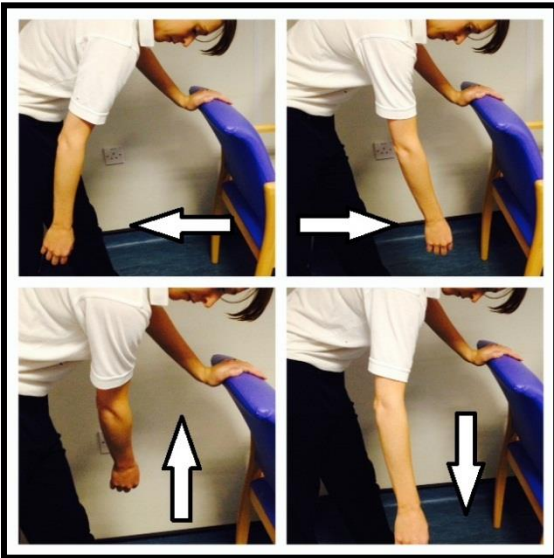
Wearing a sling can put strain through the neck. It is important you keep it moving to avoid stiffness.

Start in a seated position looking straight forward.

- Look down towards the floor, look up towards the ceiling.
- Look over your right shoulder, look over the left shoulder.
- Take your right ear to your right shoulder, take your left ear to your left shoulder.



Keep your shoulders down at all times.  
**Repeat all exercises 10 times each direction, 4-5 times per day.**



### 5. Shoulder pendulum exercises

Stand and lean forward supporting yourself with your other hand. Try to relax your injured arm and let it hang down.

1. Swing your arm slowly and gently forwards and backwards.
2. Swing your arm slowly and gently side to side.
3. Swing your arm slowly and gently in circles clockwise.

Continue for approximately 1 to 2 minutes in total provided there is no increase in symptoms.

Remember to try and relax your arm, let your arm go 'heavy'.

You will be referred to physiotherapy within 4 weeks of your injury. Here, you will be guided on progressions of your exercises by your physiotherapist.