

If you need further advice please initially contact your GP, NHS Wales (111) or NHS Direct (0845 46 47).

If you feel your injury is not getting better after 10-14 days contact the Emergency department for an appointment on 01792 703428.

This advice is for soft tissue injuries only. Only perform these exercises if they do not cause significant pain. If your diagnosis changes these exercises may no longer be suitable.



GIG
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Swansea Bay University
Health Board

ADVICE SHEET

Shoulder Injury

Emergency Department
Morriston Hospital
Morriston
SWANSEA
SA6 6NL

How to treat your injured shoulder

Following an injury to your shoulder it may be bruised, swollen and painful. This is due to damage of the soft tissues such as ligaments, tendons and muscles.

During the first three days

It is important to rest your shoulder. You may have been given a sling to help you do this. If so it is important that you remove your arm from the sling regularly throughout the day and straighten and bend your elbow, wrist, hand and fingers. Also remove the sling when you go to bed.

To help relieve the pain and decrease the swelling, apply frozen peas or crushed ice in a damp tea towel to the painful area. For maximum effect, apply for up to 30 minutes every two hours. Ice can burn so remove if uncomfortable.

Once the pain begins to settle, it is important to start gently moving your arm.

After three days

If you have not already started to move your shoulder it is now essential that you do so, to prevent future stiffness.

Exercises should be performed slowly moving to mild discomfort but stopping short of pain.

A guide to the number of repetitions and frequency of exercises is provided, but should be modified according to your pain.

1. Use your uninjured arm to assist lifting of your injured shoulder. Move to mild discomfort but stop short of pain
Repeat up to 10 times every hour.



2. Lean on a firm surface with your uninjured arm. Allow your injured arm to hang loosely, slowly swing your arm backwards and forwards. Start with small movements and gradually move as far as you can in each direction
Repeat up to 10 times every hour.



3. As number 2 but moving your arm in a circular motion.
Repeat up to 10 times every hour.

4. Stand facing a wall, "walk" your hand up the wall as far as you can.
Repeat up to 10 times every hour.



5. Reach behind your back as far as you can with your injured arm.
Repeat up to 10 times every hour.



Depending on the nature and severity of your injury it may take between 1-3 months to recover. It is advisable to continue with the exercises until full movement has returned.

Problems that may persist for some time include pain at night, especially when lying on the injured shoulder. Also pain/discomfort when the shoulder is put in certain positions i.e. reaching behind the back/above the head.

Returning to sport

Before returning to racquet/contact sports your shoulder must be pain free. The movements at your shoulder should be equal to that of the other shoulder.