

## Rehabilitation Exercises Following Rotator Cuff Surgery.

These exercises should be done three to four times per day for at least fifteen minutes. Take your pain medication 15 to 30 minutes before starting.

Warm up your shoulder with either a wheatpack, a warm towel or a hot shower before starting.

You should use an ice pack or equivalent at the end of your exercises.

You may have pain and clicking during your exercises which may last for some time afterwards. This is normal. Do not “push through the pain” if it is severe, but simply pull back a little and try again later.

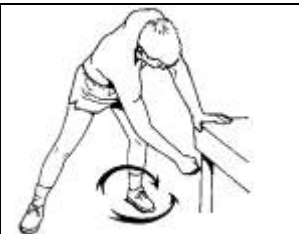
DO NOT do exercises that are not on this sheet, even if you are advised to by a physiotherapist. Ask them to clear it with me first. You may damage your repair if you do exercises and activities not on this sheet.

### Stage One.

The first two weeks.

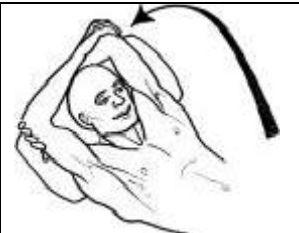
#### Pendulum Exercises.

Bend at the waist and swing the arm round in circles clockwise and anti-clockwise. Gradually increase the circles in size each time. Also swing the arm from side to side and from back to front like a pendulum. Use gravity to assist you.



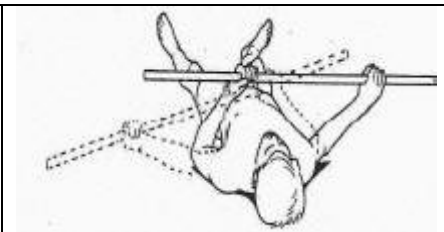
#### Elevation.

Lying on your back, use your “good” arm to support and lift your operated arm back over your head. You can also do this exercise bending forward at the waist using gravity to assist as well.




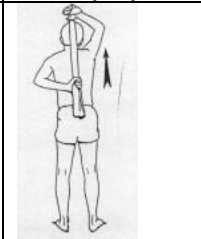
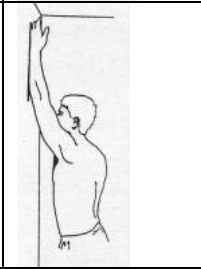
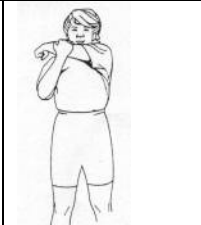
#### Rotation.

Lying on your back, using a broomstick gently rock your arms from side to side. You may also lie on your back with your hands behind your head and gently flatten your elbows down on each side. Use gravity to help.



## Stage Two

Weeks two through to eight after surgery.

<p><b>Pulley Exercises.</b></p> <p>Either seated or standing use your uninvolved arm to pull down and raise your operated arm overhead.</p>	
<p><b>Internal Rotation.</b></p> <p>Use a towel to lift the operated arm upwards towards the middle of your back. You may also do this by clasping both hands behind the small of your back and lifting upwards with your uninvolved arm</p>	
<p><b>Forward Elevation.</b></p> <p>Standing in front of a wall walk your fingers up the wall like a spider as high as possible and then lean inwards and feel the arm gently stretch. Do this either with one or both arms. Progress to grasping the top of a door and gently bending your knees to stretch.</p>	
<p><b>Posterior capsular stretch.</b></p> <p>Reach across your upper chest with the operated arm and gently pull back with the other arm to feel the stretch.</p>	

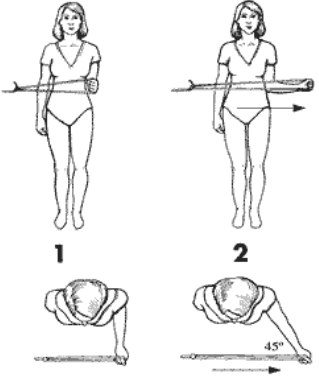
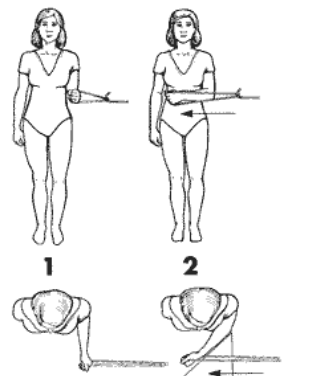
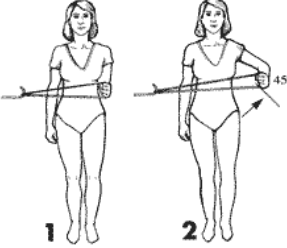
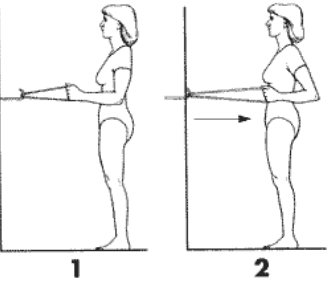
### **VERY IMPORTANT.**

It is also very important to protect the tissues while they heal. If your rotator cuff tendons have been repaired, they will take up to six months to regain strength and therefore need to be protected during this time. The first three months are the most important. Therefore, for the first six weeks:

- **Do not** lift anything with your operated arm.
- **Do not** lift it out to the side of your body without support.
- **Do not** use it for activities above your head.

### Stage Three

Weeks eight through to fourteen.

<p><b>Thera-Band Exercises.</b></p> <p>These exercises should be done with physiotherapy supervision. Strengthening exercises are performed as demonstrated in the diagrams with Thera-Bands (as pictured here).</p>	<p><b>External Rotation</b></p> 	<p><b>Internal Rotation</b></p> 
<p>All exercises to be done with the elbow at the side.</p> <p>Start with the easy band first and progress to the firmer bands a two-weekly intervals.</p>	<p><b>Abduction</b></p> 	<p><b>Extension</b></p> 

**OR**

The exercises can be done with a pillow against a wall or door as pictured below.

External rotation	Internal rotation	Abduction	Extension
