

# SHOULDER SOFT TISSUE INJURY



Lakeridge  
Health

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

## WHAT IS A SHOULDER SOFT TISSUE INJURY?

A soft tissue injury usually refers to a ligament sprain, but it could also mean an injury to a surrounding muscle or tendon of your shoulder.

## HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO RECOVER?

This type of injury usually heals with a gradual increase in use of the shoulder. Symptoms (e.g. pain) are usually minor. However it may take 3-6 weeks for symptoms to subside.

## HOW TO PUT ON A SLING

1. Place your forearm in the material pocket, making sure that your elbow rests at the back of the pocket (elbow should rest at a 90 degree angle).
2. Place the neck strap around the back of your neck, looping it through the ring on the material pocket near the top of their wrist, pulling the strap back towards your chest and attaching it to the Velcro. The neck strap should be tight enough so that your elbow rests at a 90 degree angle.
3. Loop the back strap around your back, through the ring on the bottom of the material pocket near their pinky finger, attaching it to the Velcro once looped through the ring.

STEP 1 →



STEP 2 →



STEP 3 →



FINAL →



## OPTIMAL RECOVERY PLAN

TIME SINCE INJURY

0-72  
HOURS

- Rest your arm in the sling for comfort. See instructions below regarding how to put on the sling.
- Take your arm out of the sling and move your shoulder/arm, as tolerated (see exercises below).
- Apply ice to the injured area for up to 10-15 min, every 3-4hrs. Allow skin temperature to return to normal before reapplication of ice. Protect your skin by wrapping an ice pack or frozen peas in a damp towel to ensure the ice is never in direct contact with your skin.
- It may be more comfortable to sleep sitting upright.
- Follow pain relief advice given by the Doctor you saw in the hospital, or consult your Pharmacist or Family Physician.

0-2/3  
WEEKS

- Stop wearing the sling, as you feel comfortable.
- Continue with the exercises prescribed to you.

3  
WEEKS

- By now you should be returning back to your normal activities. You still might feel some discomfort with higher level activities, such as carrying heavy groceries.
- If you experience a significant increase in pain and/or swelling then reduce your activity levels and gradually increase the level of activity over a longer period of time.

# HOME EXERCISE PROGRAM



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Early movement of your shoulder is important to prevent stiffness. Please note, the number of times you need to perform each exercise is included as a guide only. If you experience a significant amount of pain while doing a certain exercise then you should reduce the number of times you do that exercise, and gradually increase the amount during your recovery.

## UPPER EXTREMITY RANGE OF MOTION EXERCISES

Repeat each exercise 10 times, 3 times a day.

1. Bend and straighten the elbow.



2. Position your elbow at a 90 degree angle and keep your elbow at your side. Turn the palm of your hand back and forth so that it faces up and then down.



3. Squeeze your shoulder blades together. Hold for 5 to 10 seconds.



5. Use your non-injured hand to lift your injured arm up in front of you (refer to the picture).



6. Hold onto a counter and lean forward. Relax your shoulder muscles. Use your body to swing your arm back and forth, side to side, and in small circles (clockwise and counter clockwise).



For further advice and recommendations on exercises, please consult a Physiotherapist in your community. If you need a referral for Physiotherapy, please ask your Family Physician.

### Return to Sport

Before you return to sport you should be able to use your shoulder/arm in normal day-to-day activities without pain. It is recommended that you see a Physiotherapist in your community prior to returning to any sport.

### Return to Driving

You should be able to perform a full emergency stop confidently and without pain before you consider returning to driving.