

How to Treat a Shoulder Injury



**Information for you if you have attended
the Minor Injury Unit**

Telephone: 0300 125 6800 (Yate MIU) | 01275 546852 (North Somerset MIU) | 0300 124 6260 (Bristol MIU)



**Scan the QR code to view the MIU page on the
Sirona care and health website.**

How to treat your injured shoulder

Following injury, your shoulder may be swollen, bruised and painful due to sprained muscles, tendons and ligaments. In order to help the natural healing process, follow the advice below.

During the first 3 days

- It is important to rest your arm to prevent further swelling. You may have been provided with a sling to support the arm. If so, use it.
- Frozen peas or crushed ice in a damp tea towel can be applied to the painful area. For maximum effect, apply for up to 20 minutes, every 2 hours. Cold can burn, so remove if uncomfortable.
- Once the worst of the pain begins to settle, it is important to start gently moving the injured arm. This may well be uncomfortable at first, but is essential to avoid future stiffness. Check that you can move your elbow, wrist and hand fully. Use your other arm to assist the movements of your injured shoulder. Move into discomfort, but short of pain.

Move your shoulder

...forwards ...out to the side



Repeat 4 - 5 times daily.

After 3 days

You can now gradually discard your sling and progress your exercises to the following:

Exercise 1

Lean on a firm support with your uninjured arm. Allow your injured arm to hang loosely away from your body.

- a) Slowly swing your arm backwards and forwards alongside your body. Start with small movements and then gradually move as far as possible in each direction. Repeat for 1-2 minutes.
- b) Now swing across your body and out to the side as far as possible. Repeat for 1-2 minutes.
- c) Move the arm in a circular motion. Start with small circles increasing to larger circles. Repeat for 1-2 minutes.



Exercise 2

Stand facing a wall, placing your hand flat against it. Slowly slide or 'walk' your hand up the wall as far as possible. You can use a piece of 'blu tack' to mark your daily progress. Remember to come down the wall slowly!

Repeat 2-3 times.

Exercise 3

Reach up behind your back as far as possible with your injured arm. Compare with your other arm.

Repeat 2-3 times.

Repeat exercises 4-5 times daily and, as your arm becomes more mobile, steadily build up your level of activity.

Depending on the nature and severity of your injury, it may take between 1-3 months, sometimes longer to recover. It is advisable to continue with the exercises until full movement has returned, although in some cases some permanent loss of movement may occur.

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

Returning to sport

Before returning to racquet or contact sport, your shoulder should be free of pain, supple and strong. Consider weight training to build up your shoulder fitness. Just be sensible and steadily build up your exercise tolerance.

Pain relief

Pain relief medication can help you to reduce the pain allowing you to undertake any suggested exercises and movements of the injury. Moving will help ease the pain and speed up your recovery significantly. Simple pain relief medications such as Paracetamol and Ibuprofen are often all that is required. Please read the medication instructions before taking anything.

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Contact us

Our minor injury and urgent treatment centres support the local community with urgent minor injuries and/or illnesses. They are led by our specialist emergency nurse practitioners, who are fully trained in both adult and paediatric care.

They are walk-in centres so you don't need an appointment or a referral – you can just arrive at the centre during opening hours. These centres are not appropriate for life-threatening injuries or serious illnesses.

Bristol Urgent Treatment Centre Minor injuries and illnesses Open 8am-8pm,
7 days a week South Bristol NHS Community Hospital Hengrove Promenade
Hengrove, Bristol BS14 0DE T: 0300 124 6260

Yate Minor Injury Unit Minor injuries only Open 8am-8pm, 7 days a week Yate West Gate Centre 21 West Walk, Yate BS37 4AX T: 0300 125 6800

Clevedon Minor Injury Unit Minor injuries only Open 8am-9.00pm (last admission 8.30pm), 7 days a week North Somerset Community Hospital Old Street, Clevedon BS21 6BS T: 01275 546852

We want you and the people who help you to understand what we send. If you need help with this letter or leaflet, please tell us.

We can help with larger print, audio (a message to listen to), Easy read, British Sign Language or this information in another language. Please contact this service.



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Please scan the QR code to listen to an audio version of this statement.

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