

Greater Tuberosity Fracture Key Points

Rehabilitation Advice from NBT Orthopaedic Team

What is a Greater Tuberosity fracture?

It is a break in the bone of the upper part of the bone, near your shoulder. This guide will help you recover with simple exercises to improve movement, reduce pain, and get your shoulder working well again.

Week 1:

- Wear the sling all day and night for the first 2 weeks.
- Take the sling off during the day to do gentle neck, elbow, wrist, and hand exercises.



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Exercise 1 – Pendulum

- Lean on a table with your good arm and let your injured arm hang down and relax.
- Gently swing it in small circles, forwards and backwards.



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Exercise 2 – Neck Stretch

- Slowly tilt your head towards one shoulder until you feel a gentle stretch on the opposite side.
- Hold for 3 seconds, repeat 5 times per side.



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Exercise 3 – Elbow Bends

- Keep your upper arm close to your body, slowly bend and straighten your elbow.
- Repeat 5 times

Exercise 4 – Wrist and Hand Exercises

(Do these throughout your day with your arm in the sling)



- Move your wrist up and down.
- Make a fist, then spread your fingers wide.
- Touch your thumb to each fingertip one at a time.

From Week 2

Keep wearing your sling but start doing these exercises little and often. Only move as far as feels comfortable.



Exercise 5 – Assisted Shoulder Lifts

- Lying on your back use your good arm to gently lift your injured arm up over your head as far as is comfortable.
- Gradually increase the range over time.



Exercise 6 – Arm Slides

- Place both hands on a table with a small towel under each arm.
- Slowly slide your hands along the table as far as is comfortable, using your good arm to help.



Exercise 7 – Wall Walks

- Stand near a worktop and place both hands on it, shoulder-width apart.
- Slowly walk your body away from the worktop, letting your injured arm move gently away from your body.

From Week 6

- Start using your arm for light tasks, such as holding a cup of tea.
- Keep your elbow bent and keep movements where you can see them.
- Do not lift heavy things or raise your arm straight out to the side yet.
- If your shoulder gets sore as you do more, take pain relief as needed so you can keep moving.

Continue all the exercises from the earlier weeks, gradually increasing how far you move and how much you use your arm.

From Week 12

Only start these once you can lift your arm comfortably. Begin with a light weight such as a tin of beans or a small water bottle. Start with the first two exercises and slowly add the others as you get stronger.



Exercise 8 – Internal Rotations

- Standing or sitting, hold your arm close to your body with your elbow at a right angle.
- Push your hand inwards against the resistance of your other hand. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 5 times.



Exercise 9 – External Rotations

- Standing or sitting, hold your arm close to your body with your elbow at a right angle.
- Push your hand outwards against the resistance of your other hand. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 5 times.



Exercise 10 – Lateral Raises

- Lie on your side and place a towel under your elbow.
- Hold a light weight and slowly lift your hand up and down slowly.



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Exercise 11 – Overhead Reach

- Lying on your back, hold a small weight in your hand.
- Push your arm up to the ceiling, then slowly reach it back over your head, keeping your arm close to your ear.



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Exercise 12 – Shoulder Press

- Whilst standing, hold weights at shoulder height and press them straight up so your arms are straight.
- Keep a good posture and try not to shrug your shoulders.

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Exercise 13 – Wall Push-Ups

- Stand close to a wall with your arms outstretched touching the wall. Lean forward and bend your elbows to lower your chest towards the wall.
- Then push back to straighten your arms.

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