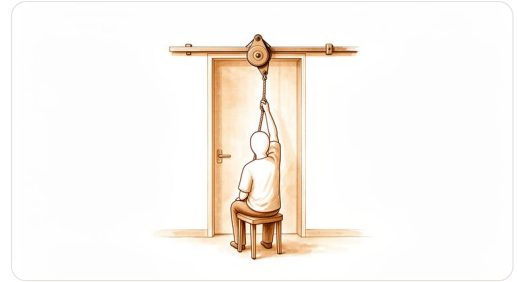


Inpatient exercises – capsular release & subacromial decompression

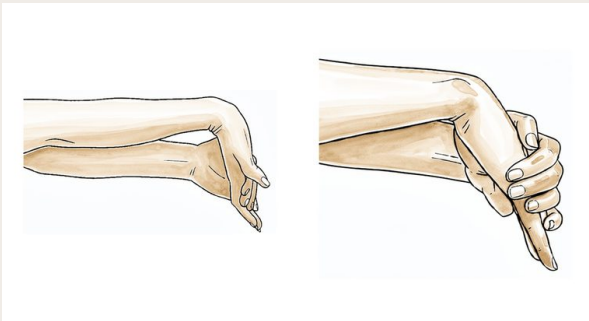


Early in-hospital exercises after capsular release or subacromial decompression.

Kieran Hirpara 4.0

These are the gentle exercises to begin in hospital after a capsular release or a subacromial decompression. For these operations the priority is to keep the shoulder moving freely.

Your exercises

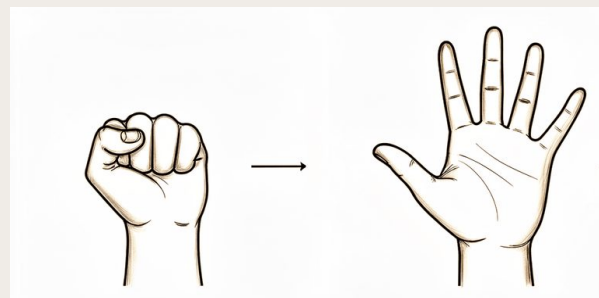


Kieran Hirpara © ⓘ 4.0

Wrist movement

Keep your hand moving by bending your wrist forwards, backwards and side to side.

10 times, 3 times per day

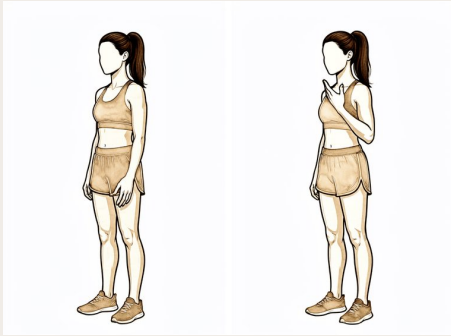


Kieran Hirpara © ⓘ 4.0

Open and close hand

Keep your hand and fingers moving by opening and closing them, or by squeezing a stress ball.

10 times, 3 times per day

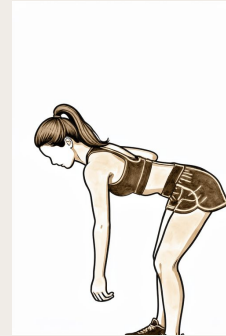


Kieran Hirpara © ⓘ 4.0

Elbow bends

Bend and straighten your elbow.

10 times, 3 times per day

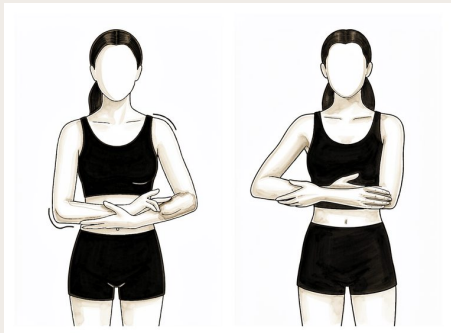


Kieran Hirpara © ⓘ 4.0

Pendulums

This is a passive exercise. Lean forward and let your arm relax down. Use your body to move the arm gently either clockwise or anti-clockwise, along with forwards, backwards and side to side.

About 30 seconds each way, 3 times per day

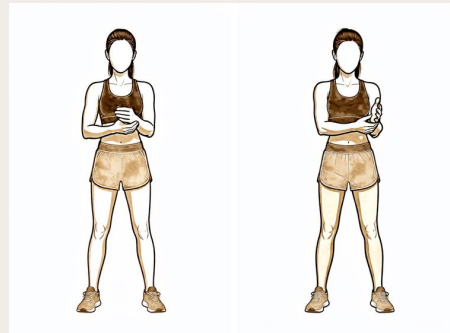


Kieran Hirpara © ⓘ 4.0

Assisted abduction

Sitting on a chair and leaning forward, cradle the arm again and help it out to the side (like rocking a baby).

10 times, 3 times per day

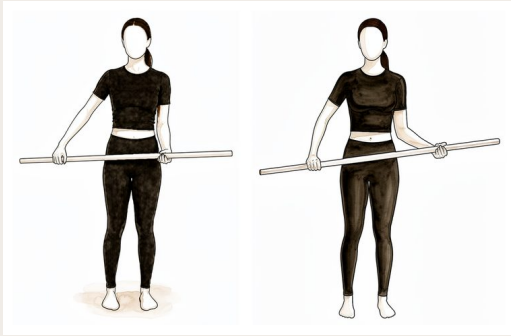


Kieran Hirpara © ⓘ 4.0

External rotation

Sitting on a chair, only move your arm from where it sits in the sling to pointing straight in front of you. Don't go further outwards.

10 times, 3 times per day

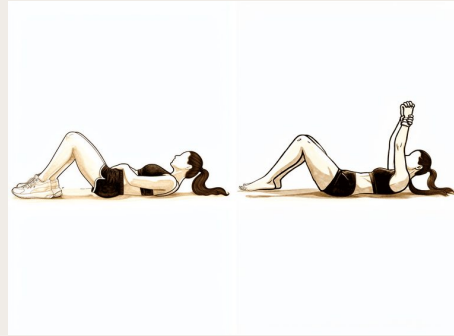


Kieran Hirpara © ⓘ 4.0

Assisted external rotation with a stick

Lie on your back with your elbow tucked by your side and bent to a right angle. Hold a stick in both hands and use your good arm to turn the operated hand outwards, rotating the shoulder. After this operation there is no limit on how far out you go, so gently push the range a little further as it frees up.

10 times, 3 times per day

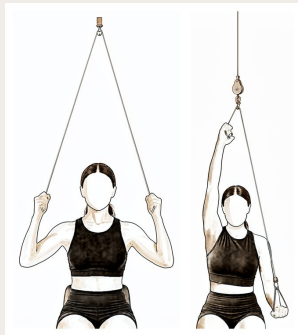


Kieran Hirpara © ⓘ 4.0

Assisted forward flexion (lying)

If you prefer, lie on your back and hold a stick or a rolled towel in both hands. Use your good arm to push the operated arm up over your head, as far as it will comfortably go, then lower it slowly. Push into a firm stretch each time.

10 times, 3 times per day

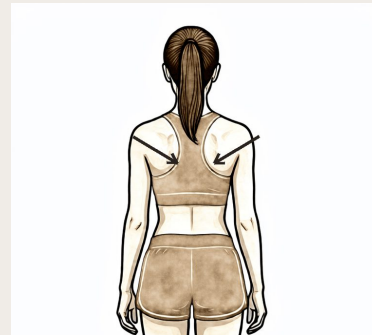


Kieran Hirpara © ⓘ 4.0

Over-door pulley

Sit under an over-door pulley with a handle in each hand. Pull down with your good arm to raise the operated arm overhead as far as it will go, then lower slowly. Take it to a firm stretch each time, not severe pain.

10 times, 3 times per day

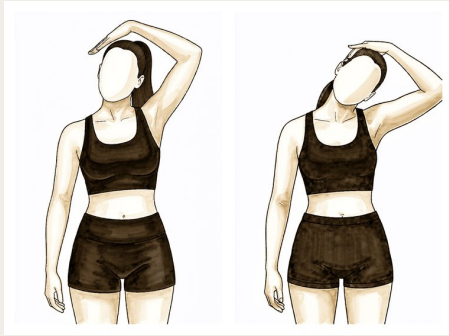


Kieran Hirpara © ⓘ 4.0

Lower trapezius setting

Squeeze your shoulder blades downwards and together.

Hold 5 seconds, 5 times, 3 times per day



Kieran Hirpara © ⓘ 4.0

Upper trapezius stretch

Use your non-operated arm to bring your ear towards your shoulder, away from the operated side.

Hold 10 seconds, 3 times, 3 times per day

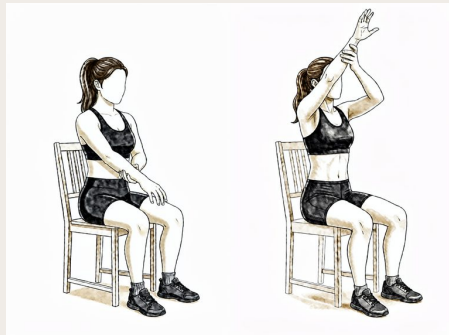


Kieran Hirpara © ⓘ 4.0

Levator scapulae stretch

Use your non-operated arm to bring your nose towards your armpit area, away from the operated side.

Hold 10 seconds, 3 times, 3 times per day



Kieran Hirpara © ⓘ 4.0

Assisted forward elevation (sitting)

Sitting and leaning forward slightly, support the operated forearm with your good hand and use it to lift the operated arm forwards and up in front of you, as far as is comfortable, then lower it slowly. Let the good arm do the work so the operated shoulder stays relaxed.

As guided by your physiotherapist

Begin these gentle exercises in hospital and continue them at home. They should be comfortable – ease back if pain increases.

Wearing your sling

- The sling is only to be worn for comfort, and should be left off as much as possible. You don't need to sleep in the sling.
- Move and use your arm as much as possible.
- It is advisable to wear the sling when out of the house, to prevent people knocking into your arm.
- Aim for physiotherapy sessions at least twice a week for the first six weeks.
- Use ice for pain relief if needed.
- When wearing your sling, relax your shoulder and let the sling take the weight of your arm.
- Take your painkillers before you do your exercises, and before your physiotherapy appointments.
- Unless you have arranged your own physiotherapy, an appointment has been made for you and is detailed in your discharge pack.
- If you have any problems, contact the rooms or let your physiotherapist know.

When you go home

Once you are home, your recovery continues with the full rehabilitation protocol for your operation: [capsular release](#); [subacromial decompression](#).

These early in-hospital exercises are adapted from published patient guidance and rehabilitation protocols for these procedures, and the week ranges are typical rather than fixed – your physiotherapist guides your recovery individually based on how your shoulder responds. The evidence behind this early phase – why the priority after a capsular release is immediate movement rather than protecting the shoulder – is summarised in the evidence section, available as a PDF from the top of this page.