

# Exercises after your elbow surgery

## Physiotherapy

Information for Patients

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## Exercises after elbow surgery

- It is important that you follow the information and exercises given to you.
- Exercising your elbow early is important to avoid stiffness. You should do these exercises gently every hour throughout the day. Your consultant may ask you to wear a sling, but please take this off to do your exercises and put it back on afterwards.
- Do not use your arm until your doctor or nurse tells you this is ok.
- The bandages are normally taken off 48 hours after the operation.
- The ward physiotherapist will show you basic exercises for your hand and wrist.
- Exercises to move the elbow, your shoulder, wrist and hand usually start on the first day after the operation, unless your surgeon asks for a longer period of rest.
- Try not to make sudden movements.
- The exercises should not cause you more pain.
- You may find tubigrip bandage helpful to increase sensation, reduce swelling and pain.
- Sometimes using a mirror can be helpful to ensure smooth, relaxed movement, and so that you can check you are doing the exercises correctly.
- The exercises are designed to improve the movement available and get the muscles to work to give you an elbow that can carry out everyday tasks.

## Progression of your recovery

Your physiotherapist will guide you when you can progress to the next stage of your recovery and when you can stop wearing your sling. This may be when the soft tissue and fracture have been given enough time to heal. The physiotherapist will measure your elbow range of movement to make sure it is improving.

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## Exercises

1. Lying on your back support your upper arm so your elbow is pointing towards the ceiling. Work on straightening and bending the elbow. It is important you do this lying down with the upper arm supported in the early stages after your operation to give your elbow enough support.



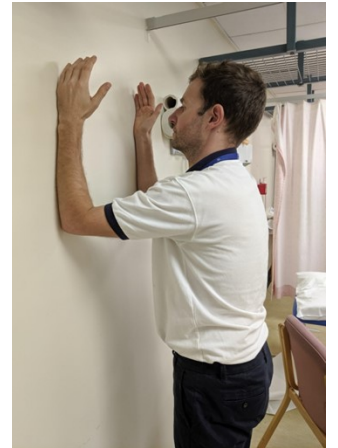
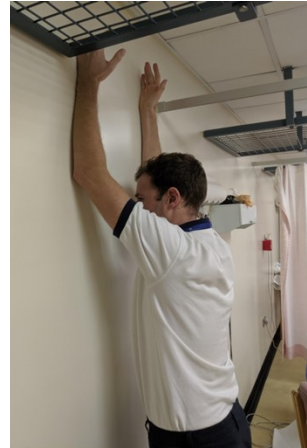
2. Support your forearm on a table and bend and straighten your elbow by sliding forwards and backwards



### At 1 to 2 weeks:

Continue with the previous exercises that were shown to you from day one. These exercises are important to maintain your movement. Progress to the following as you feel able to:

3. Wall slides with forearms in contact with wall. Stand in front of the wall. Place your forearms onto the wall and step and lunge forwards whilst sliding the forearms up and down.



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