

## PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

### WHAT IS IT?

The shoulder joint is a ball and socket joint. You have broken (fractured) the ball part of the shoulder or the area just below it. This injury takes on average 6-12 weeks to heal. This leaflet provides initial guidance on your injury.



The proximal humerus (ball portion of the ball and socket joint of the shoulder)

### PAIN



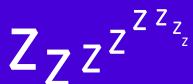
Your shoulder may be swollen and feel painful. Taking pain medication and applying ice, cold packs or frozen peas wrapped in a damp towel can help. When using ice therapy apply it to your shoulder for 15 minutes every couple of hours.

### DRESSING



Always dress your injured arm first and take it out of clothes last when undressing. It is easier to use loose clothing with front button shirts and pull-up trousers with an elastic waistband in the first few weeks.

### SLEEPING



You may find it easier to sleep more upright than usual, using pillows to prop you up in bed. This may be the more comfortable position to ensure a good night's sleep.

## SLING



You should wear your sling all of the time including at night. It should only be removed when taking the arm out to wash, dress and do your exercises. Your medical team will advise you which sling to wear (collar and cuff or broad arm sling) and how long the sling is to be worn (usually around 4 weeks). Initially your sling will be fitted for you while in hospital.

### COLLAR & CUFF SLING



To take on/off, place hand in/out of the small opening and your head in/out of the large opening.

### BROAD ARM SLING



1. To apply your sling, slide it over your wrist, forearm and elbow until your elbow sits in the corner of the sling.
2. Take the shoulder strap across your back and over your uninjured shoulder.
3. Feed the strap through the ring and attach it back to itself with the velcro once your wrist is in line with/slightly higher than your elbow.
4. The waist strap is optional for comfort.

### ARMPIT HYGIENE



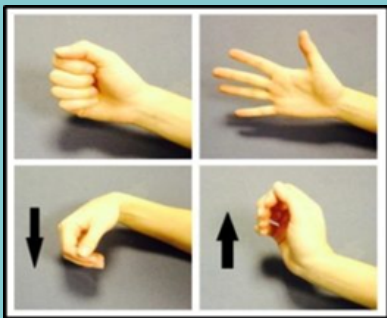
You are allowed to remove your sling to wash. A strip wash may be the safest and most comfortable option. To wash under your arm, lean forwards so that your arm hangs slightly away from your body. You may require assistance to wash your uninjured arm.

## EXERCISES

It is important to start the prescribed exercises straight away to prevent stiffness. Aim to complete each exercise 10 times, 4-5 times a day.

### HAND & WRIST

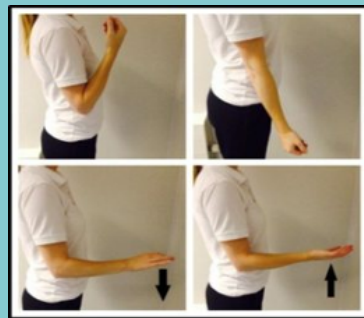
(START IMMEDIATELY)



1. Open and close your hand.
2. Move your wrist up and down.

### ELBOW

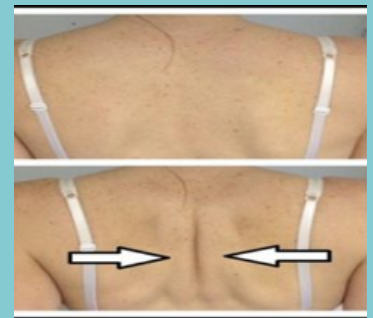
(START IMMEDIATELY)



1. Bend and straighten your elbow.
2. With elbow bent to a 90-degree angle, slowly turn your palm up and down.

### POSTURE

(START IMMEDIATELY)



1. Draw shoulders back and squeeze your shoulder blades together and hold for 5-10 seconds.

### PENDULUM

(START AFTER ONE WEEK)



1. Stand next to a firm surface such as a countertop. Bend at your waist and use your un-injured arm to lean on the countertop. Let your injured arm hang down to the ground.
2. Gently rock your body weight from side to side, forward and back and in circles in small movements.
3. This exercise does not use the arm muscles but rather the movement of your legs creates momentum to allow your shoulder to swing back and forth passively like a pendulum

## ORTHOPAEDIC FOLLOW-UP

Following your discharge from hospital, your case will be reviewed by an orthopaedic consultant who may send an onward referral to the virtual fracture clinic. In this case, you will be contacted via telephone by a Clinical Specialist Physiotherapist or Nurse who will update you and provide follow up guidance virtually if required.

Alternatively, you may have a follow up appointment in the fracture clinic with the orthopaedic team usually around 2-3 weeks. Here the team will guide you on the healing of your injury and the next stage of your management & rehab.

## HEALING



Smoking or vaping will slow down your healing and can sometimes lead to non-union. It is recommended that you stop smoking/vaping while your fracture heals.

For tips on quitting check out:

- <https://www.cuh.hse.ie/media/pil/smoke-free-campus-leaflet-december-2022-final.pdf>
- <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/tobaccocontrol/resources/hse-vaping-and-e-cigarette-informaton-2023.pdf>



## NOTE



Contact the hospital you visited with your shoulder injury if the following occurs:

- Pain increases
- You cannot do your exercises
- Your sling is damaged and unwearable

## USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

- Cork University Hospital: 021-4922000
- Bantry General Hospital: 027-50133
- Mercy University Hospital- Urgent Care Centre: 021-4926900
- Mercy University Hospital: 021-4271971/ ext. 5155
- Mallow General Hospital Injury Unit: 022-58506

