



## Personal exercise program

Musculo-skeletal and Pelvic health physiotherapy services  
If you wish to provide feedback of our Service please use this web link.



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## **Rotator cuff related pain**

### **What is the rotator cuff?**

The shoulder is a complex region of the body made up of 3 joints, and multiple muscles and ligaments. The rotator cuff muscles are found deep within the shoulder. They arise from the shoulder blade and attach via their tendons to the top of the shoulder bone. They provide strength and stability to the shoulder during movement. When there is a problem with these tendons individuals can experience pain, weakness and stiffness on lifting the shoulder up and with rotational movements.

### **How do problems with the rotator cuff develop?**

- injury or trauma to the arm
- weakness in the rotator cuff muscles
- repetitive activities/ exercise
- following a change in activity or stress on the shoulder
- a flare up of degenerative changes within the tendons

When the rotator cuff muscles and/or tendons have been injured or aggravated they can become painful over the top of the shoulder. Some people also experience pain traveling down the side of the arm to the elbow.

The tendons within the shoulder can become inflamed and painful which can make movement difficult. In some cases these muscles can over protect the shoulder, which can become very stiff and limited with movements. Because of the pain and limited movement these muscles become weaker and make movement even more challenging.

### **Aim of physiotherapy in management**

Managing how much load and stress goes through your shoulder is important to treating rotator cuff pain. Initially reducing aggravating activities can help settle down the pain, with the aim of building back up to your activity and tasks over time. However, it is important that we do not completely rest the shoulder or these muscles will become weaker, increase your pain and limit your function.

The aim of this rehabilitation programme is to gradually increase the range of movement and strength of the shoulder.

Over a period of time you should notice an increase in your strength and you should be able to build up the amount of exercises you can tolerate and progress onto harder exercises.

A small amount of pain is acceptable and can be expected during the rehabilitation exercises but should not aggravate your pain or make it worse.

- Pain should be 4/10 or less during the activity
- No increased pain for prolonged periods 24hours after exercises
- The pain shouldn't interfere with sleep following the exercises

You can increase and decrease the amount of exercises you can tolerate depending on your pain symptoms.

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Perform 2-3 sets of these exercises a day. You can practice the sets all in one go with a rest of 3-4 minutes. If this is too much you can split the exercises up throughout the day with a longer rest period.

You want to practice each of these exercises to fatigue or do as many as you can tolerate as your pain allows.

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### Eccentric Shoulder External Rotation

Sit diagonally by a table. Bend your elbow and place it on the table. The elbow should be slightly in front of the body and slightly lower than your shoulder. Hold a dumbbell in your hand with your hand pointing straight up.

Keeping the elbow and shoulder in place, in a controlled manner lower the hand forward. Return to the starting position using support from your other hand.

Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times.

Note: You can use a folded towel to elevate the elbow.

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### Bent Over Row

Stand with your trunk and buttocks active holding weights in each hand. Tilt forward from your hips, keeping spine and neck in a neutral position.

Pull your elbows back and squeeze your scapulae in and down. Lower the arms down in a controlled manner.

Note:

- Don't let your shoulders rotate forward when pulling your elbows back.
- Maintain neck in neutral position.

Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times

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Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times

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### Wall Push Up

Stand next to a wall. Place your hands on the wall, slightly wider than shoulder-width apart and fingers pointing upwards. Body is in a straight line.

Keep body in a straight line and shoulders down. Bend your arms and lower your chest towards the wall. Straighten your arms and push back away from the wall.

Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times



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### Assisted Arm Raise in Supine

Lie on your back.

Use one arm to lift the other arm up over your head, or as far as is comfortable.

Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times



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### Wall Slide

Stand tall, facing a wall. Forearms against the wall with palms facing each other. Activate your trunk and buttocks and maintain neutral spine position throughout the exercise.

Lean towards the wall while sliding your arms upwards to approximately 165 degrees ('Y' position). Let your shoulder blades 'slide outwards' and your keep shoulders down. At the 'Y' position, lift your arms slightly off the wall. Return to the starting position.

Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times



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Lie face down. Take your arms out to a 90 degree angle.

Tighten the muscles between your shoulder blades and lift your arms with thumbs pointing upwards. Do not lift your elbows above your body.

Hold   5   seconds.

Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times

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Lying face down with your forehead on the floor, arms outstretched with your elbows at right angles.



Lift your elbows and forearms off the floor squeezing your shoulder blades together.

Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times

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### Shoulder Flexion with Weight Shift



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Stand with one leg forward with your weight on the rear leg. Hold an exercise band in one hand and wrapped around the other hand with your elbows bent.

Move your weight towards your front leg and at the same time bring your arms forwards and upwards while keeping the band tight. Keep your neck and shoulder relaxed. Bring the weight back to the rear leg and lower your arms to your side.

Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times

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Stand keeping your upper arm close to the side and elbow at a right angle. Hold a rubber exercise band.



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Pull the band by turning your forearm outwards.

Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times

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Stand keeping your upper arm close to the side and elbow at a right angle. Hold a rubber exercise band.



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Pull the band toward your stomach.

Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times

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Sit or stand holding on to a rubber exercise band with both hands.

Pull the band with both arms pushing the shoulder blades together.

Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times



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Stand or sit. Hold an exercise band with both arms straight in front of you.

Pull the band with both arms and tighten your shoulder blade muscles. Do not lift your shoulders.

Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times

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### Lateral Raise



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Stand tall, with arms by your sides, holding weights. Start with a small weight 0.5-1kg (or a can of beans)

Lift your arms to the side, keeping elbows straight. Palms face downwards or forwards.

Note: Keep your chest open and try not to shrug your shoulders.

Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times.



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### Shoulder Scaption

Stand tall with arms by your sides, holding weights. Start with a small weight 0.5-1kg (or a can of beans)

Lift your arms out in front of you, with thumbs pointing upwards. Lift to \_\_\_\_\_ 90 \_\_\_\_\_ degrees. Lower your arms to the starting position in a controlled manner.

Note: Don't sway your back and try not to shrug your shoulders.

Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times.

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