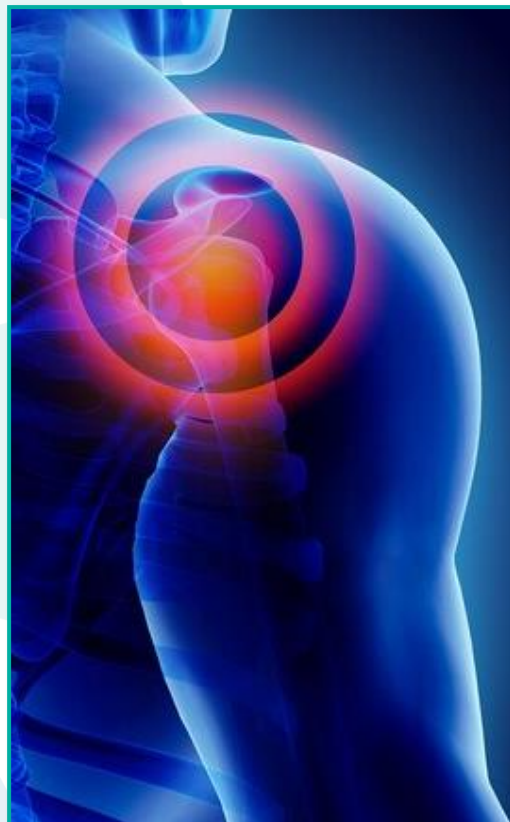


SAP Information & Exercise

Subacromial Pain Syndrome

This is a generic term that describes pain associated with any of the structures that sit within the subacromial space of the shoulder. The subacromial space refers to the space above the shoulder's glenohumeral joint (ball-and-socket joint) and below the acromion, the top-most bone of the shoulder. This includes conditions such as subacromial bursitis, rotator cuff tears, rotator cuff or bicep tendon problems and calcific tendons



Causes

Anyone can develop symptoms of subacromial pain syndrome and many factors can contribute towards its development. These include:

- Muscle weakness
- Shoulder stiffness
- Posture
- Age related change of the muscles/ tendons or joints of the shoulder
- Unaccustomed activity of the shoulder

Symptoms can develop gradually or follow from an injury and are more commonly experienced in individuals older than 45 years of age.

Diagnosis is usually made from the patient's history and a simple examination, without the need for special investigations. An x-ray or ultrasound scan may be performed if there is uncertainty about the diagnosis or if symptoms fail to settle with a course of physiotherapy.

Symptoms

The level of pain associated with the condition can vary from person to person with some people reporting a pinch or catch of pain that occurs with certain movements and others reporting a more severe ache that can cause sleep disturbance and affect normal activities. This type of shoulder pain can affect both shoulders but it is more usual to only have it on one side.

The main symptoms of subacromial pain syndrome include:

- An ache or sharp pain in the shoulder or upper arm that is often worse during shoulder elevation such as lifting activities
- A 'painful arc' where pain is produced at certain angles of shoulder movement
- A feeling of Stiffness or weakness when using the arm
- Discomfort lying on the painful side that could affect ability to sleep

Prognosis

For 70-90% of patients, conservative management of subacromial pain syndrome is effective in reducing pain and improving function. This is achieved through exercise and self-management alone.

Management

You can have a significant impact on managing your own symptoms. Treatment options depend on the severity of your symptoms and what stage your conditions has reached. By doing the exercises and following the advice in this leaflet, your shoulder should start to feel better within 6 to 12 weeks.

Research has shown that doing the right type of rehabilitation exercises will enable you to successfully treat yourself. This is usually made easier by avoiding aggravating activities as much as you are able.

Read the following advice for things you can do to help yourself.

Lifestyle Adaptations

Some simple changes in how you perform your daily tasks may help;

- When getting dressed wear loose and front-fastening tops and put your affected arm into the armhole first.
- In bed at night you could use towels or pillows to support your arm, which will also help you stop rolling onto your painful shoulder.

Pain Management

Ice/Heat

Using Ice to cool or Heat to warm the painful area can be helpful in managing pain. The smaller the body area the less time you will need to keep the ice or heat on. Start with 5 minutes but no more than 15/20 minutes per body part.

Use a damp towel between yourself and ice to prevent any cold burns. Use a dry towel between yourself and the heat to prevent heat burns. Regularly check your skin while using ice or heat and remove immediately if any burns or injury occurs. Only use heat/ice if your skin sensation is normal.

Use Ice for Pain relief or **after** activity/exercise.

Use heat for pain relief or **before** activity/exercise.

Pain Relief

Over the counter pain relief medication can be used to reduce your pain so you can be more active or complete your exercises.

All medications have side effects and must be used carefully. Paracetamol and ibuprofen are the most common over the counter pain killers. However, some medical conditions will prevent you from taking them so, you should always check with your GP or Pharmacist to ensure they are safe for you.

If you decide to take pain medication it is important to take them at the recommended dose and to take them regularly to prevent a flare up of your symptoms and allow you to remain active and continue exercising.

Corticosteroid injection

If your symptoms are severe, or not improving after trying the advice in this leaflet then you may be offered a corticosteroid injection. This can help to ease the pain, making physiotherapy more comfortable for you.

A corticosteroid will only reduce your pain, therefore it is important to re-start your exercises usually after 2 weeks to gain the full benefits from this treatment option.

Some individuals may not be able to receive this treatment due to their current health or types of medicines they are already taking.

Referral to Orthopaedics

In a small number of cases, self-help and non-surgical treatments fail to improve the symptoms. In this situation you may be referred to an Orthopaedic Consultant. They will tell you whether surgery can help your shoulder pain.

Prognosis

For 70-90% of patients, conservative management of subacromial pain syndrome is effective in reducing pain and improving function. This is achieved through exercise and self-management alone.

Further Information

<https://www.shoulderdoc.co.uk/section/9>

<https://bess.ac.uk/patient-resource-subacromial-shoulder-pain/>

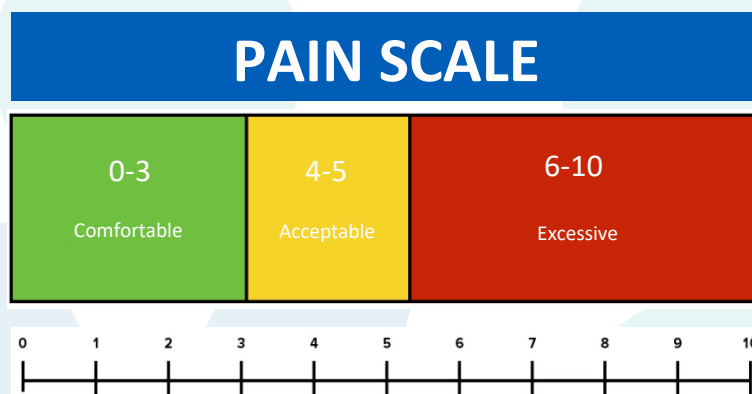
Exercise

Pain during exercises should be manageable. Aim to stay within the green and amber zones. If experiencing excessive pain then you can modify the exercise, and then slowly build it back up over time;

- Reduce the range of movement
- Reduce repetitions
- Reduce the resistance/weight being used
- Slower, less intensity and control the movement more
- Increase the rest between each set of exercises

Progress onto the next stage of exercise once they become easier and you can fully complete the exercises in the comfortable zone of the pain scale.

- Pain after exercise should settle to your pre exercise levels within 30-60 minutes.
- Pain or stiffness due to exercise in the next morning should not last longer than 60 minutes.
- Use your pain relief, ice/heat or anything else you have found that eases your symptoms to help manage.



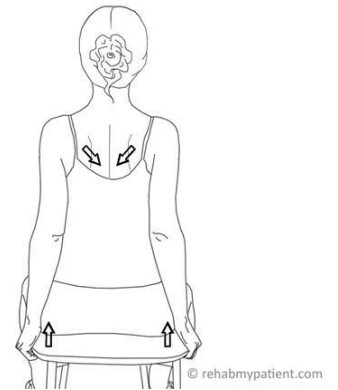


Stage 1

Scapular Retraction

Keeping your feet on the floor, and your hands gripped to the side of the chair (with the arms straight), pull up against the bottom of the chair (i.e. upwards). You should feel a muscular contraction at the bottom of your shoulder blades

Repeat 8 repetitions | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily

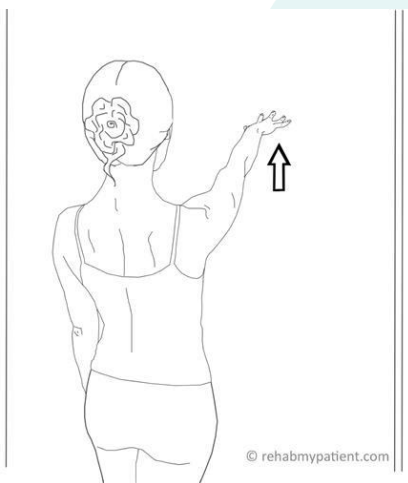


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Wall Crawl Forwards

Walk your fingers up the wall. Keep the movement within your comfort zone. Carefully walk your fingers back down the wall. Ensure you keep your shoulder relaxed - do not allow your shoulder to hunch as you lift it. This exercise will help improve mobility to your shoulder.

Repeat 8 repetitions | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily

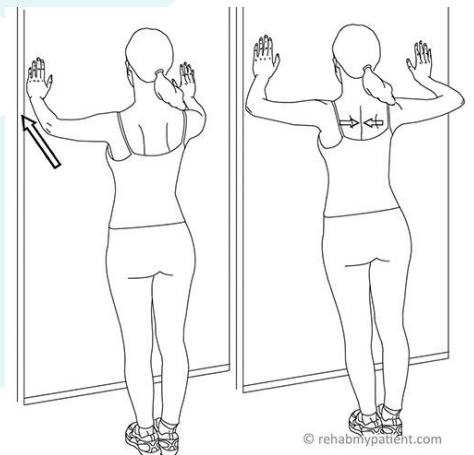


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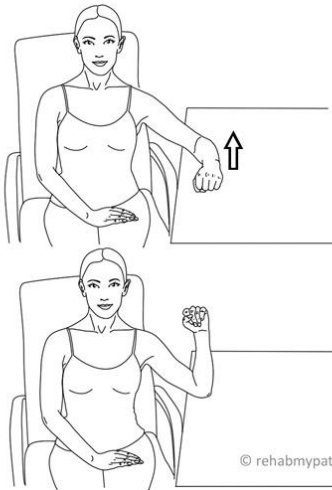
Wall Press-Up

Position yourself in a press-up position with your arms straight, and palms flat on the wall. Drop your chest towards the wall by bending your elbows. Hold this position for 1-2 seconds. Return to the start position. This is a chest, back and shoulder strengthening exercise. You can make the exercise harder by standing further back from the wall.

Repeat 8 repetitions | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily



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Desk External Rotation

Resting your forearm on a desk, with your arm bent at 90 degrees, rotate your arm outwards away from the table. Your elbow stays in contact with the desk the whole time. This is a strengthening exercise for the rotator cuff shoulder muscles.

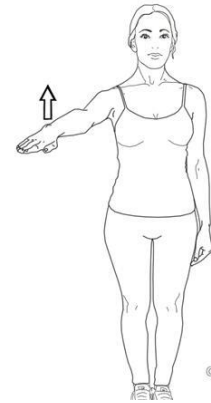
Repeat 8 repetitions | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily



Stage 2

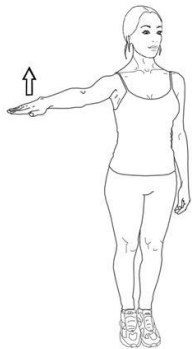
Eccentric Shoulder Flexion

Lift your arm up in front of you as far as feels comfortable. Slowly lower down your arm counting down from 5 to 1. This exercise will improve mobility and strength to your shoulder. You can add a weight to make this harder such as a tin of beans or a bottle of water



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Repeat 8 repetitions | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily



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Eccentric Shoulder Abduction

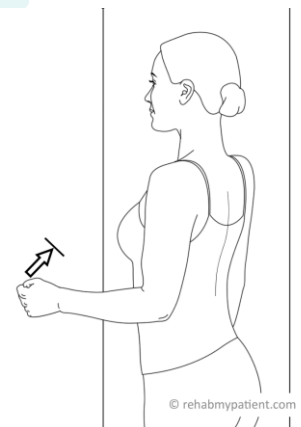
Take your arm outwards to the side of your body and lift your arm up as far as feels comfortable. Slowly lower down your arm counting down from 5 to 1. This exercise will improve mobility and strength to your shoulder. You can add a weight to make this harder such as a tin of beans or a bottle of water

Repeat 8 repetitions | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily

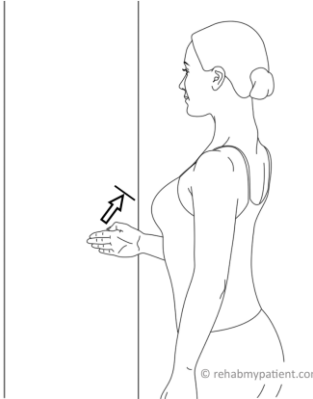
Isometric Shoulder Internal Rotation Wall

Stand with your side to a wall or a door frame. Tuck your elbow into your body. Push your arm inwards across your chest, into the wall. Keep your elbow tucked into your side as you perform the movement. This will cause a contraction of the shoulder muscles. Hold the contraction and relax.

Repeat 8 repetitions | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily



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Isometric Shoulder External Rotation Wall

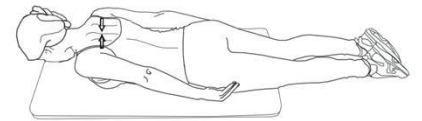
Stand with your side to a wall or a door frame. Tuck your elbow into your body. Push your arm outwards away from your body, into the wall. Keep your elbow tucked into your side as you perform the movement. This will cause a contraction of the shoulder muscles. Hold the contraction and relax.

Repeat 8 repetitions | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily

Lying Retraction

Lie face down, with your arms by your side. Squeeze your shoulder blades inwards. You will feel a muscular contraction around and between your shoulder blades.

Repeat 8 repetitions | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily

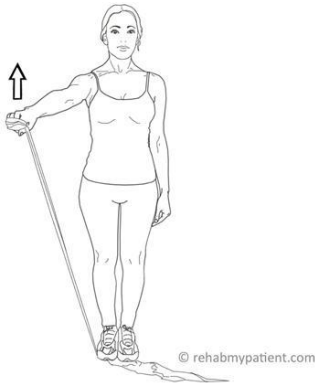


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Stage 3

Band Flexion



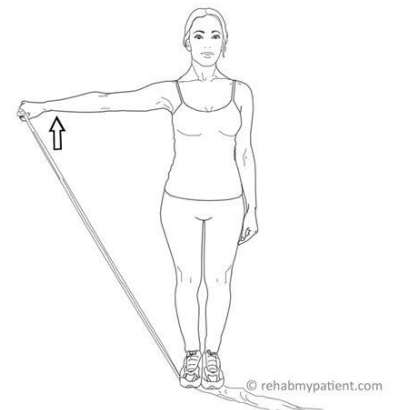
Place an exercise band under your foot and lift the other end upwards. Take your arm out slightly to the side (30 degrees from the front). When you have reached your limit, move your arm back down. This exercise will improve mobility and strength to your shoulder.

Repeat 8-12 repetitions to the count of 5 seconds per repetition |
Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily

Band Abduction

Place an exercise band under your foot and lift the other end towards the side of your body. When you have reached your limit, move your arm back down. This exercise will improve mobility and strength to your shoulder.

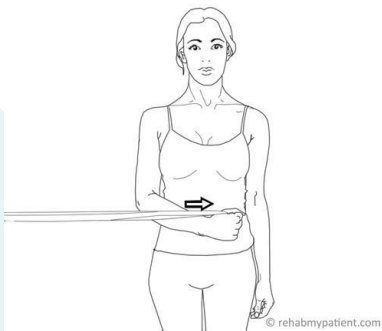
Repeat 8-12 repetitions to the count of 5 seconds per repetition |
Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily



Internal Rotation with Band

Tuck your elbow in, keeping it next to your body, and move your arm inwards towards your stomach using the band as resistance. This is an important strengthening exercise for the rotator cuff shoulder muscles.

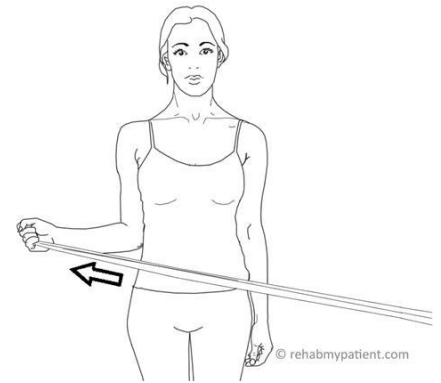
Repeat 8-12 repetitions to the count of 5 seconds per repetition |
Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily



External Rotation with Band

Tuck your elbow in, keeping it next to your body, and move your arm outwards away from your stomach, using the band for resistance. This is an important strengthening exercise for the rotator cuff shoulder muscles.

Repeat 8-12 repetitions to the count of 5 seconds per repetition |
Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily



Double Arm Bent Over Row with Band

Lean forwards to a 45-degree angle, and pull a band backwards with two hands keeping your elbows tucked in. This is a back and shoulder strengthening exercise.

Repeat 8-12 repetitions to the count of 5 seconds per repetition |
Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily