Physiotherapy Department

Exercises following Hydrodistension

The following advice should be taken and the exercises should be commenced immediately after your Hydrodistension. You should aim to start the exercises on the same day as your procedure.

Pain relief

So that you can perform these exercises and in order to allow you to continue with your normal activities, it is advised that you take regular pain medication following this procedure. Please follow the instructions on the packet. You can stop taking the pain relief as soon as you feel your shoulder is comfortable and pain does not limit your exercises or your daily activities.

Heat can also be useful if your shoulder is achy, stiff or painful following your Hydrodistension. A hot water bottle or wheat bag can be used. Please protect your skin by covering it in a towel so that the heat source is not directly on your skin. This can be repeated two to three times daily.

Exercises

Try to do these exercises little and often throughout the day. For the first two weeks after your Hydrodistension, aim to perform these exercises five times a day and then move to two to three times a day after this.

Start with five repetitions of each exercise and increase up to 20 repetitions as you are able. Mild discomfort while exercising is expected as you will be stretching your shoulder. If you find any particular exercise is more painful than this, leave it and try it again later that day. You should find that all exercises become more comfortable the more you practise them.

Shoulder blade position:

- Circle your shoulders backwards.
- Then gently draw the shoulder blades back and down.
- Try to keep the neck relaxed and don’t squeeze the shoulder blades together too hard.

Hold for 30 seconds and repeat five times.

Once you have achieved this you can progress to the following exercises, maintaining the alignment of the shoulder blades, while you do the other exercises.
Shoulder rolls:
- While sitting or standing, roll your shoulders forwards and backwards.
- Make the movement as big as possible.
- Repeat 10 - 20 times.

Pendulum movements:
- Stand leaning on a table with one hand, let your affected arm hang relaxed straight down.
- Swing your arm forwards and backwards and then circle it, as if drawing a circle on the floor. Make the movement as large as possible.
- Change direction.

Repeat 10 - 20 times each direction.

Forward stretch:
- Stand with your hands on a table. Slowly walk backwards letting your body lean forwards and keeping your hands on the table. You can bend the knees.
- Think about bringing your arm-pits gently down towards the floor.
- Repeat this five times. Hold for 15 - 20 seconds.

Elevation stretch:
- Lie on your back.
- Lift your affected arm over your head and gently push it down towards the floor, assisting with your other hand.
- Keep the back of your ribcage and lower back against the floor beneath you and try not to arch your back.
- Hold for five to ten seconds and repeat five times.

Outwards rotation stretch:
- Sit with your elbows bent and a towel between your elbow and trunk.
- Hold a stick and push the hand of the affected arm out to the side, whilst keeping your elbow close to the body.
- Repeat this five times. Hold for ten seconds at the end of the movement.
Wall slides - forwards and sideways:
- Place a towel on the wall and place your affected side hand on the towel.
- Standing facing the wall, step forwards and slide the towel upwards.
- Step in towards the wall and bring your armpit as close to the wall as you can.
- Then step back and slide the towel down again.
- Stand with your affected arm side-on to the wall
- Step sideways towards the wall as you slide the towel upwards.
- Then step sideways, away from the wall and slide the towel down again.
- Repeat five to ten times.

Hand behind back stretch:
- Place your affected hand behind your back and hold with your other hand.
- Gently take your affected hand up your back, helping with the other hand.
- You can also try gently pushing your affected side hand away from your back, using your other hand to help.
- Alternatively you can assist the movement with a towel if easier.
- Repeat five to ten times.

Assisted sideways stretching with stick:
- Hold a stick in your hands.
- Lift the affected arm up to the side and assist by pushing with your other hand.
- Hold at the top of the movement for five seconds and then lower down.
- Repeat ten times.
Contacts/further information

If you have any concerns following your surgery, then please contact your GP as soon as possible.

We are a smoke-free site: smoking will not be allowed anywhere on the hospital site. For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169.

Other formats:

If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio, please ask the department where you are being treated, to contact the patient information team: patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk.

Please note: We do not currently hold many leaflets in other languages; written translation requests are funded and agreed by the department who has authored the leaflet.

Document history

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Contact number
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Publish/Review date
November 2018/November 2021

File name
Exercises_following_hydrodistension.doc

Version number/Ref
1/101013