

Passive movements

Upper limbs



Information for patients

Therapy Services



PROUD TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

SHEFFIELD TEACHING HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST



General information

Passive movements are exercises that we recommend to people who cannot move their arms themselves. This is because, when arms become paralysed, the joints and muscles may become stiff and fixed into one position through lack of movement.

Why is it important to do these exercises?

By putting your joints through a range of movements regularly you will:

- Prevent / reduce stiffness and painful joints.
- Increase circulation and decrease swelling.
- Ensure you keep a useful range of movement to allow you to get dressed, sit correctly in your wheelchair and perform other functional activities.

How long will it take me to do the exercises?

The exercises described in this leaflet do not take long to do and can easily be fitted into your day at a time to suit you. You should do them as well as any other exercises that your physiotherapist has given you.

How often should I do these exercises?

You should aim to go through the full range of exercises about 5 to 10 times each, 2 or 3 times a week. The movements should be slow and rhythmical but be careful not to over-stretch.

These exercises will help to keep a range of useful movement, but don't forget; standing, lying prone (on your stomach) and even the daily movement that your limbs are put through as you get dressed will help too.

Is there a risk in doing these exercises?

Be careful not to over-stretch when doing these exercises, as it may cause damage or injury to joints or muscles.

What should I do if I think muscles have been over-stretched?

If you think that you have over-stretched, then stop the exercises and seek advice from your GP or physiotherapist.

Shoulder movements

When moving the shoulder, take care to support the arm well.

1. Bring the arm out to the side and turn the palm up towards the ceiling.

Lift the arm towards the person's head, bending the elbow as you go.



2. Bring the arm out to the side and then across the chest to touch the opposite shoulder and then back out to the side.



3. Bring the arm over the person's head towards the ceiling, keeping the arm close to the ear, do this with the elbow straight and bent



4. Bring the arm out to the side, bend the elbow to 90 degrees (right angle) and move the lower arm towards the head end of the bed



With the elbow bent, take the arm above the head, with the palm of the hand facing towards the ceiling



Elbow movements

To stretch the elbow, support the arm above and below the elbow joint.

1. Bend and straighten the elbow, bringing the hand towards and away from the shoulder.



2. Keeping the elbow at the person's side at 90 degrees, support the wrist, turn palm over and back.



Hand and wrist movements

With the limb supported:

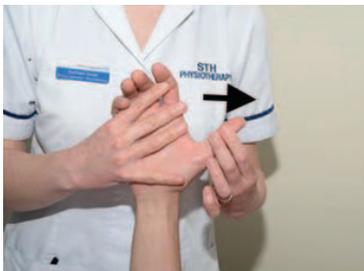
1. Move the wrist backwards and forwards, allowing the fingers to stay relaxed.



2. Keeping the wrist straight, curl and straighten the fingers.



3. Keeping the wrist straight, stretch the thumb away from the index finger, then bring it across the palm towards the little finger.



Individual comments:

If you have any questions or concerns please contact us
on: **0114 271 5680** or **0114 271 5674**



**Sheffield
Hospitals
Charity**

To help support your local hospitals visit
sheffieldhospitalscharity.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 1165762



Yes I donate
ORGAN DONATION

**Alternative formats can be available on request.
Please email: sth.alternativeformats@nhs.net**

© Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust 2021

Re-use of all or any part of this document is governed by copyright and the "Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2005"
SI 2005 No. 1515. Information on re-use can be obtained from the Information Governance Department, Sheffield Teaching Hospitals.
Email sth.infogov@nhs.net