



AC Joint Injury

About your Injury

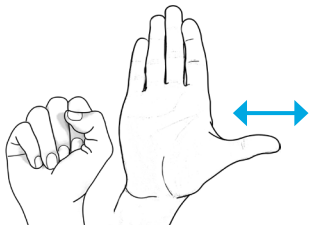
You have an injury to your shoulder to an area called the "AC joint". This is a fibrous joint that connects your collar bone and the top part of your shoulder blade. This injury is most commonly caused by falling directly on to or receiving a direct blow to that shoulder.

What can I expect?

- These injuries normally take 3-6 weeks to heal, but soft tissue injuries can persist for up to 3 months.
- You have been given a sling to use for comfort/support. Try to rest your shoulder for the first 24-72hrs, however it is important to maintain movement, gently move your shoulder as soon as pain allows, following the exercises shown.
- Regular pain relief may be required.
- You may find it easier to sleep sitting slightly upright propped up with pillows.

Initial Exercises — Stage 1— start straight away 4-5 times daily.

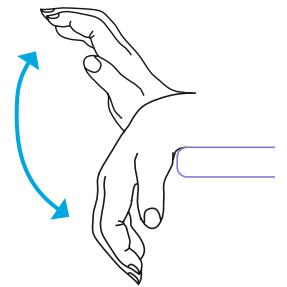
Finger, wrist and elbow exercises



Flexion and extension

- Open and close your hand 10-15 times

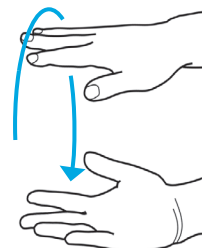
- Move your wrist up and down 10-15 times



- Remove your arm from your sling.
- Bend and straighten elbow within pain free range.

Rotate palm up and down

- Put your elbow at your side. Bend it to 90 degrees.
- Slowly rotate your palm up and down within comfort.
- Repeat 10-15 times provided there is no increase in symptoms.

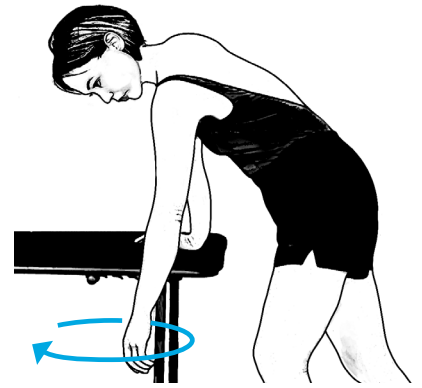


Shoulder pendulum exercises

Stand and lean forward supporting yourself with your other hand. Try to relax your injured arm and let it hang down.

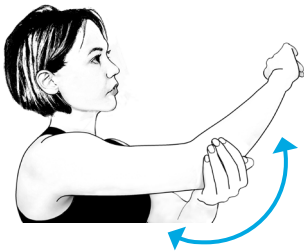
- Swing your arm slowly and gently forwards and backwards.
- Swing your arm slowly and gently side to side.
- Swing your arm slowly and gently in circles clockwise.

Continue for approximately 1-2 minutes in total provided there is no increase in symptoms. Remember to try and relax your arm.



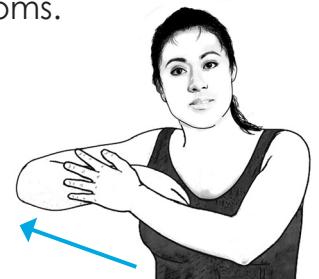
Stage 2- Exercises: start these exercises at 2 weeks post injury (or as soon as pain allows), do 4-5 times daily.

Repeat these exercises 10 times provided there is no increase in symptoms.

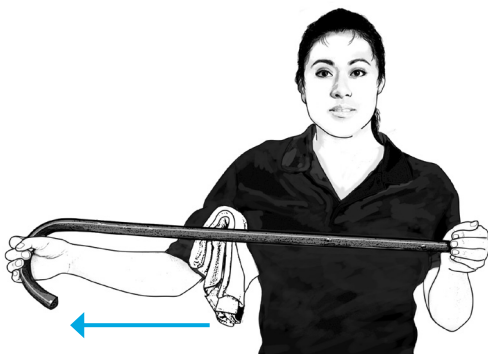


- Active assisted shoulder flexion

- Active assisted abduction



- Active assisted external rotation (push until you feel a stretch and hold for 5 seconds)



Summary

0-2 weeks	✓ Wear your sling during the day, except for exercises and personal hygiene, wear off as soon as pain allows. ✗ Do not wear your sling at night. ✓ Start "initial exercises" shown straight away. ✗ Do not lift your elbow above shoulder height as this may be painful.
2-6 weeks	✗ Try not to use the sling. ✓ Begin normal light activities with the arm and shoulder. ✓ Increase movement as shown in the stage 2 exercises. ✗ Avoid heavy lifting for the full 6 weeks.
6-12 weeks	✓ The injury should be largely healed. ✓ Resume normal day to day activities but be guided by any pain you experience. ✓ Heavy tasks may still cause some discomfort. ✓ Start to lift your arm over – head
12	✓ If you are experiencing significant pain and stiffness the please contact us for advice/review.

You can return to driving when you are no longer using the sling and have a normal pain free range of movement

If you have any questions in regard to pain control and medication contact your local pharmacist or GP.

Contact details:

Raigmore Hospital
Old Perth Road,
Inverness, IV12 3UJ.
Tel: 01463 704000 ext:4294

Tel: Fracture Clinic Helpline -

Monday to Friday 12 - 3 pm 07779 422980

In an emergency contact NHS 24 - Tel: 111

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