

# Shoulder Rehabilitation

The following guidelines provide information on simple exercises that can be performed in the home to help you with your shoulder problems. Pain and stiffness in the shoulder have many causes, but nearly all of them will improve with the use of simple exercises to improve mobility and strengthen the muscles. The shoulder is a very mobile joint as a rule and depends not only on the joint itself but also the shoulder blade.

- 1) You should spend 10-15 minutes at the beginning and end of each day doing the exercises (see illustrations).
- 2) Do not persist with exercises which seem to make the pain worse. Indeed, your doctor may well have crossed out certain exercises in the booklet which are not suitable for your case.
- 3) If you seem to be getting worse, see your doctor so that he can reassess you. He may prescribe drugs to help with pain and relax tense muscles and these should be taken as directed.
- 5) Carefully follow any other advice he may have given you about your condition. If in doubt ask!
- 6) Sometimes, the application of a little local heat, in the form of a hot water bottle, or a heat lamp, prior to doing the exercises may help to make them easier, but it is not essential, and again it is as well to get the advice of your doctor before using local heat.
- 7) While the shoulder is still troubling you it is worth remembering that the painful side should be put in to a sleeve first when dressing and removed after the good one when undressing.

## **Mobilising & Strengthening Exercises**

Restoring a normal range of pain-free movement to the shoulder involves a two-step process; firstly mobilising the shoulder joint and then strengthening it

STEP 1 Mobilising exercise are any exercise that involve movement of a limb/joint without the use of any weight, or resistance.

To begin with the movements are for a limited range of motion, gradually progressing to a full range of motion. They are intended to restore a normal, pain-free range of movement in the limb/joint.

Exercises range from straight arm shoulder circles and arms bent elbow circles to lifting the arms out in front of the body, to the sides and up in the air. They also include hands touching behind the neck and back and a series of bent over pendula swinging movements

STEP 2 Strengthening exercises are any exercise that involve movement of a limb/joint with the use of a weight, or some form of resistance, e.g. rubber tubing/bands.

Initial strengthening exercise are simply the mobilising exercises with the addition of a light weight, or resistance. (See illustrations)