

# Arthroscopic Capsular Release of Shoulder

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## **Brett Sanders, MD**

Center For Sports Medicine and Orthopaedic  
2415 McCallie Ave.  
Chattanooga, TN  
(423) 624-2696

### **Phase 1: The first month after surgery**

#### **Goals:**

1. Prevent shoulder stiffness
2. Regain range of motion

#### **Activities:**

##### **1. Sling**

Use your sling as needed for comfort. Remove the sling every hour to do pendulum exercises ( fig. 1).

##### **2. Use of the operated arm**

You may use your hand on the operated arm in front of your body but do not lift any heavy objects. Move the arm at the elbow, wrist and fingers to keep those joints mobile. It is alright to type and use a computer, and to use the arm for eating.

##### **3. Showering**

You may shower and wash the incision area. To wash under the operated arm, bend over at the waist and let the arm passively come away from the body. It is safe to wash under the arm in this position. This is the same position as the pendulum exercise.

### **In- Hospital Physical Therapy**

A physical therapist will see you to perform passive range of motion to your shoulder.

Physical therapy schedule:

Day of surgery: 1 visit

First post-op day: 2 visits

Second post-op day: 1 visit

### **Home Exercise Program - Begin Immediately**

#### **ICE**

Days per Week: 7      As necessary      15-20 Minutes      Times per Day: 4-5

#### **STRETCHING / PASSIVE MOTION**

Days per Week: 7      Times per day : 4-5

**Program:**

Pendulum exercises	1-2 sets	20-30 reps
Supine External Rotation	1-2 sets	10-15 reps
Supine passive arm elevation	1-2 sets	5-10 reps
Behind the back internal rotation	1-2 sets	5-10 reps

## Exercises

Shoulder stretching is divided into two phases. **Phase 1, or passive range of motion**, is always performed with the uninjured arm assisting or helping the operated arm. **Phase 2, or active range of motion** with a terminal stretch, is performed by the operated arm with the uninjured arm assisting for a "terminal stretch". In most instances, wean off passive range of motion by using the uninjured arm to assist the operated arm. The other major difference between passive and active stretching is the "terminal stretch". During active stretching and upon reaching your "endpoint" of pain or movement, push the operated arm with the uninjured hand another 5-10 degrees for additional movement. This final movement is labeled "terminal stretch". Maximum motion for each person remains the goal and terminal stretching will assist in achieving that goal.

All stretching exercises should be done slowly to maximize muscle and soft connective tissue involvement. When stretching, your goal is to reach the maximum range of motion for YOU. There is a reason for multiple sets and repetitions. This reason stems from "warming up" the shoulder so that it can actually stretch further in the last few repetitions that you will do. The first few repetitions prepare the stiffened or swollen shoulder for initial movement.

Since there is more than one repetition per set, allow the first one or two repetitions to be warm-up reps, with very little pain. Gradually work into more and more range of motion.

It is also important to allow pain to be your guide. Move the arm to an "endpoint" (that endpoint is dictated by the amount of pain). Your goal is to increase the endpoint as often as possible until you have reached the full range of motion. As far as pain, you want to avoid excruciating pain, but "discomfort" is tolerated as long as the pain does not remain for a prolonged period of time. A basic rule to follow when stretching is, if the pain does not linger, you did not stretch too far.

### 1. Pendulum exercise

Bend over at the waist and let the arm hang down. Using your body to initiate movement, swing the arm gently forward and backward and in a circular motion.



### 2. Shoulder shrug

Shrug shoulders upward as illustrated.

### 3. Shoulder blade pinches

Pinch shoulder blades backward and illustrated.



together, as

### 4. Supine passive arm elevation

Lie on your back. Hold the affected arm at the elbow with the opposite hand. Using the strength of the opposite arm, lift the affected arm upward, as if to bring the arm overhead,



slowly lower the arm back to the bed.

### **5. Supine external rotation**

Lie on your back. Keep the elbow of the affected arm against your side with the elbow bent at 90 degrees. Using a cane or long stick in the opposite hand, push against the hand of the affected arm so that the affected arm rotates outward. Hold 10 seconds, relax and repeat.



### **6. Behind-the-back internal rotation**

Sitting in a chair or standing, place the hand of the operated arm behind your back at the waistline. Use your opposite hand, as illustrated, to help the other hand higher toward the shoulder blade. Hold 10 seconds, relax and repeat.



7. Finish each set of exercises by applying ice to your shoulder for 20 minutes. Be sure to place a layer of cloth between the ice and your skin to help avoid cold injury to your skin.

### **Office Visit**

Please arrange to see Dr. Sanders according to his instructions after surgery