

Patient Diary

Right Shoulder Subacromial Decompression and AC Joint Excision

Day of operation

- Woke after surgery at 5pm. Meal at 6pm. Discharged at 8pm
- Shoulder aching but manageable. Started regular painkillers (Co-codamol and Ibuprofen)
- Comfortable night sleeping upright with sling on

Day One

- Quiet day around the house, removed sling only for exercises, which were moderately painful
- Shaved and brushed teeth with left hand. Uncomfortable night, shoulder sore when moved
- Painkillers 4 times a day

Day Two

- Had bath, washed hair and dressed. Took an hour, with a lot of help
- Shaved, brushed teeth and applied underarm deodorant with right hand but can't brush hair. Able to put in contact lenses
- Went shopping in the morning, then removed sling for the rest of the day
- Exercises less painful. Using computer mouse and keyboard with ease
- Slept with sling on and pillow under right arm. Comfortable night
- Painkillers 4 times a day

Day Three

- Shoulder very sore on waking, but eased after first exercises
- Still can't brush hair with right hand
- Another comfortable night
- Painkillers 4 times a day

Day Four

- Little pain on waking. Occasional shoulder pain when making sudden extended movements
- Showered in the evening and changed dressings – wounds healing nicely
- Woke in the night with sore arm. Removed sling and slept with arm straight and resting on a pillow – much better
- Painkillers 4 times a day

Days Five to Seven

- Shoulder sore on waking and during first exercises. Can brush hair carefully with right hand
- Returned to work (short commute by train). No problems moving around, using computer or handling paperwork. Occasional pain on extended movements
- Painkillers 4 times a day

Day Eight

- Drove to work. No problems as long as I don't stretch out to close the door!
- Had first physio session in the evening. Good range of movement

Day Nine

- Shoulder more painful than usual after physio!

Days Ten to Fourteen

- Shoulder settling down nicely, stopped painkillers
- Able to do most things, including lifting and overhead work for short periods
- Arm pain during extreme movements when exercising

Day Fifteen

- Second physio session. Range of movement further improved, but can't raise arm behind back
- Given additional exercises for next two weeks

Weeks 2 to 4

- Slight improvement in range of movement (except behind back)
- Mild pain in top of shoulder and down arm during certain movements
- Sleeping on shoulder causes discomfort or tingling
- Physio every two weeks now

Weeks 5 to 8

- Resumed sports activities – swimming and full-bore target shooting – slight discomfort at first but soon eased. Worked up to 20 brisk lengths, three times a week

Weeks 9 to 12

- Exercising with Theraband twice a day
- Slow but steady improvement in range of movement
- Starting to get my arm up behind my back now

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Week 13 onwards

- Finished physio but continuing with Theraband exercises
- Now able to do most DIY tasks – lifting, carrying, working overhead, digging, hammering, drilling etc
- At last I can scratch my back!

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