

# Elbow Exercises



## *First 6 weeks after removal of a cast/sling*

Your elbow was injured and that meant you had to be in a cast and/or sling for a period of time to help it to heal. During this time your elbow may have become stiff and the muscles may be tight and weak. Now that your orthopaedic doctor is happy the injury has healed, it is important to slowly move and strengthen the arm to get you back doing what you want and need to do.

### **Skin and Swelling**

You will notice the skin may look strange after the sling/cast is removed, but it is normal to have skin and hair that has gathered. If you had surgery you will see a scar that should be well on its way to being fully healed. Wash the skin with warm, soapy water and apply moisturising cream if the skin is very dry. Gradually the skin will return to normal. If you have any concerns about your scar check with your physiotherapist, orthopaedic doctor or local doctor.

There is often still some swelling in the arm after the cast has been removed; you may want to wear a compression bandage or glove and elevate your hand at times during the day to help reduce the swelling. The injury should continue to improve with time and exercise.

### **Exercises**

The following exercises are to help you get back to normal. Try to do these exercises three times a day.

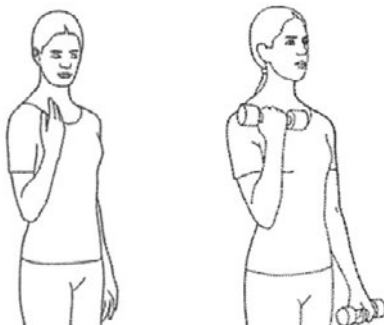
You will feel some stretching or pressure in the elbow and even some mild pains during the exercise, but these should ease off by stopping the movement. If you are feeling strong pain stop the exercises and check with your physiotherapist or orthopaedic doctor before starting again.



Bend your elbow and keep it in to your side (like in the picture shown). Now try to turn the wrist so the hand faces up to the ceiling. Then reverse the movement, twisting the wrist so the palm faces the floor.

Repeat this 10 times. Start with one set and try to build up to three sets as you feel comfortable to do so.

If you find this easy place a small weight in your hand. Start with 500g and build up as you are able.

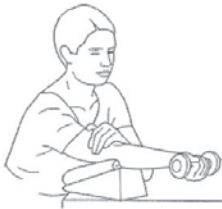


Bend your elbow, bringing your hand up to attempt to touch your shoulder (as pictured). Hold for 5 seconds and then lower, straightening the elbow as far as you can.

Repeat this 10 times. Start with one set and try to build up to three sets as you feel comfortable to do so.

If you find this easy, place a small weight in your hand. Start with 500g and build up as you are able.





Straighten your injured elbow as far as you can comfortably and then use the good hand to add an extra stretch to try and straighten it further (as pictured).

Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat three times.

If you are finding this easy hold for longer, up to a minute. If still easy, lay the arm over a pillow and use a small weight, about 500g, in the hand to further stretch it (as pictured).



Stand next to the wall and place the hands on the wall (as pictured). Slowly lower your body towards the wall to do a push up. Go as far as is comfortable.

Repeat until you are tired in the muscles of the arm and hand; usually around 10 times. Start with one set, but you could build up to three sets. Have a small 30 - 60 second rest in between.



Make a fist and hold it tightly for 10 seconds. Repeat three times. If you find it easy try to hold for longer, maybe up to a minute.

When you have the strength, you can place something in the fist, like a soft ball or some rolled up socks, and squeeze that. Hold for 10 seconds but squeeze for longer, if able.

For any questions contact Physiotherapy Departments on the following phone numbers:

Gosford  
4320 3314

Wyong  
4394 8217

Woy Woy  
4344 8446

Long Jetty  
4336 7752