



## *Frozen shoulder / Stiff shoulder*

### *Manipulation under anaesthetic for release of contracture / Arthroscopic Release with Steroid Injection*

#### **Frozen Shoulder - Manipulation under Anaesthetic (MUA) for release of shoulder contracture with/without Arthroscopic release and Injection of Steroid**

This technique is used in the treatment of frozen shoulders. A shoulder becomes frozen when the soft tissues around the joint become tight and short (i.e. contracted). This prevents the shoulder from moving and leads to the pain and stiffness with which you are familiar.

The problem may resolve over time but it can take up to two years.

#### **The Operation**

The aim of the manipulation is to reduce the recovery time by stretching the joint by the surgeon in a controlled manner, to gain full range of movement. This is combined with an injection of local anaesthetic and steroid to reduce inflammation and pain.

There may be need to proceed and perform further arthroscopic release of the contracture, if the manipulation is not successful. This operation is done by key hole surgery; usually through two or three 5mm puncture wounds. It involves examination of the shoulder joint using a tiny telescope with television camera introduced through a key hole. It involves cutting of the tight (contracted) tissues in the shoulder with a special electro-cutting/radiofrequency device to release the contracture.

The operation is performed under general anaesthetic and a nerve block (injection in your neck or upper chest) that will make your arm feel numb for 8-12 hours after surgery. This is to allow you to mobilise your shoulder immediately after surgery without pain. When this wears off, the shoulder may well be sore and you will be given painkillers to relieve the pain.



## General Advice

You will usually only be in hospital for a day. A doctor/physiotherapist will see you before you go home. You will be given exercises to do immediately after the procedure. These exercises are an essential part of your recovery.

Outpatient physiotherapy should be arranged for the day after your procedure. This should be organised before you are admitted to hospital.

It is essential that you attend regular physiotherapy in the first few weeks following your procedure. Please ensure that your employers are aware of this commitment.

You will be given a sling. This is provided purely to keep your arm comfortable. It may be taken off as much as you wish and discarded as soon as possible. You will be encouraged to use your arm. Your symptoms should be approximately 80% better after three months but may take a year to totally settle.

## Complications

As with all surgery there is a risk of some complications. These are rare, but you should be aware of them before your operation.

They include:

### Complications relating to the anaesthetic.

#### Infection.

**Injury to the nerves or blood vessels** around the shoulder.

**Reflex sympathetic dystrophy** - Sometimes, the nerves become irritable resulting in pain and stiffness in the upper limb, a condition called reflex sympathetic dystrophy (RSD).

**Fracture:** The upper arm bone (humerus) breaking. This is extremely rare.

**Failure of the operation** in improving pain or movement in your shoulder. There should be about 75% improvement in symptoms in the first four to six weeks.

**Prolonged stiffness** and or pain.

A need to **redo** the surgery.

If you require further information please discuss with the doctors either in clinic or on admission.

### What to expect after surgery.

#### Pain

The shoulder will be sore when the nerve block wears off and this may last for the first few weeks. It is important that you continue to take the painkillers prescribed in hospital. Ice packs may also help reduce pain. Wrap frozen peas/crushed ice in a damp, cold towel and place on the shoulder for up to 15 minutes.



## **Movement**

It is of the utmost importance that you begin moving and exercising the arm on the day of the procedure. The sling should be discarded as soon as possible. Adequate pain relief will enable you to perform the exercises demonstrated by the physiotherapist. Try to use the arm for normal daytime activities where possible.

## **The Wound:**

If the keyhole operation is necessary, it is usually done through two or three 5mm puncture wounds. There will be no stitches only small sticking plaster strips over the wounds. These should be kept dry until healed. This usually takes 5 to 7 days.

## **Driving:**

You may drive after one week.

## **Returning to work:**

If you have a desk job you will probably be able to return after one week. You may need slightly longer if your job involves lifting or manual work.

## **Leisure activities:**

These will depend on the range of movement and strength in your shoulder. It is possible to do most things as long as your shoulder feels comfortable. Please discuss specific activities with your physiotherapist.

## **Follow up appointments:**

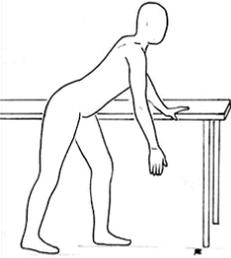
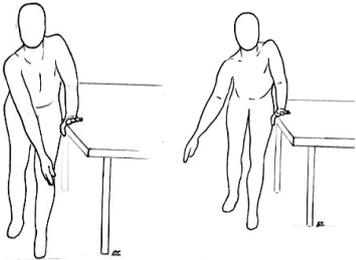
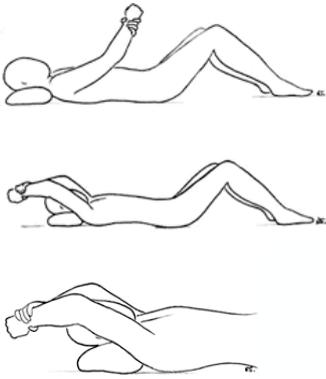
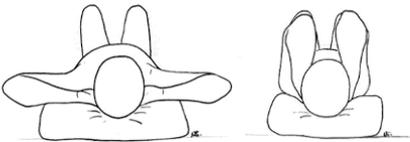
You will have a follow up appointment at The Shoulder Unit about three weeks following your procedure. You will be reviewed by the surgeon/specialist physiotherapist who will check your progress.

## **Progress:**

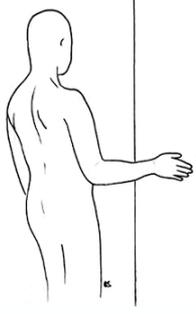
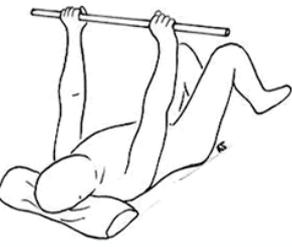
This is variable. In the first few weeks your shoulder will be sore although your movements will have improved. Do not be surprised if the soreness affects your daily activities. You should continue to move and use your arm normally. Over the weeks following your surgery you will notice a gradual improvement in movement and pain.



**Exercises:**

	<p>Stand. Lean forwards. Let your arm hang down. Swing your arm forwards and backwards. Repeat 10 times. (Shown for the right shoulder).</p>
	<p>Stand. Lean forwards. Let your arm hang down. Circle your arm clockwise &amp; anti-clockwise. Repeat 10 times. (Shown for right shoulder).</p>
	<p>Lying on your back. Support your operated arm with the other arm and lift it up overhead. Repeat 10 times. (Shown for right shoulder)</p>
	<p>Lying or sitting. Put your hands behind your head, and gently stretch the elbows towards the floor/backwards to feel a gentle stretch on the front of your shoulders. Repeat 5 times.</p>



	<p>Take your affected arm across your body to rest the hand on the opposite shoulder. Grasp the elbow with your good hand and gently stretch the arm across your body. Repeat 5 times.</p>
	<p>Standing with elbow flexed to 90 degrees. Hold the elbow close to your body, gently push the hand against a door frame, hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times</p>
	<p>Standing with your arms behind your back. Grasp the wrist of your operated arm and gently stretch the hand on your affected arm towards the opposite buttock. Then slide your hands up your back. Repeat 5 times</p>
	<p>Lying on your back. Grasp a stick in both your hands. Lift the stick up and gently take overhead until you feel a gentle stretch in your shoulder. Repeat 10 times.</p>



	<p>Lying on your back, keeping the elbow to your side. Hold a stick in your hands. Move the stick sideways, gently pushing the hand on your operated arm outwards. Repeat 5 times</p>
	<p>Standing with your arms behind your back and grasp a stick between them. Gently lift the stick up away from your body. Repeat 5 times</p>

It is essential that you carry out the exercises regularly following your procedure, ideally four to five times per day increasing as able. It is quite normal for you to experience aching, discomfort and stretching when doing the exercises but decrease the exercises if you experience intense or lasting pain.

**Wearing a Sling:**

You will return from theatre wearing a sling. The surgeon/physiotherapist will advise you on how long you are to continue wearing the sling. This is usually for 6 weeks. Depending upon the size of the tear you will commence physiotherapy immediately, at 3 weeks or only after 6 weeks. You will be expected to remove the sling for exercises only. Your physiotherapist will advise you of these.

**The Wound:**

**Open repair:** there is an incision at the top of the shoulder. The stitch is dissolvable but is usually removed at 3 weeks. Keep the wound dry until it is well healed.

**Arthroscopic (keyhole) repair:** This keyhole operation usually done through three to five 4mm puncture wounds. There will be no stitches; only small sticking plaster strips over the wounds. These should be kept dry until healed. This usually takes 5 to 7 days.

**Driving:**

You will not be able to drive for a minimum of 8 weeks. Your surgeon will confirm when you may begin.

**Returning to work:**

This will depend upon the size of your tear and your occupation. You will need to discuss this with your surgeon.

**Leisure activities:**

This will depend upon the size of the tear. Your physiotherapist and surgeon will advise you when it is safe to resume your leisure activities.

**Follow up appointments:**

An appointment will be made for you to see a physiotherapist after your discharge and you will be seen at The Shoulder Unit at 3 weeks. You will be monitored by a physiotherapist throughout your rehabilitation

**Exercises:**

You may well be expected to perform the following exercises. Your physiotherapist will teach you the following exercises before you leave hospital, if appropriate:

- 1) With your arm in the sling move your hand up and down at the wrist.
- 2) With your arm out of the sling bend and straighten the elbow
- 3) With your arm in the sling and the elbow bent at your side, turn the hand to face the ceiling and then the ground.

Repeat these exercises four times per day. The number you should perform at each session will be recorded for you by your physiotherapist.

Continue these exercises until otherwise advised by your physiotherapist.

**If your wound changes in appearance, weeps fluid or pus or you feel unwell with a high temperature, contact your GP.**

If you have a query concerning your exercises contact the physiotherapy department where you are receiving treatment.



## Appointments:

### Private:

**Professor Ofer Levy, MD MCh(Orth) FRCS**

Secretary: Cherie Emmitt

Telephone: 07367 582777  
Fax: 0118 902 8138

e-mail: [cherie@readingshoulderunit.com](mailto:cherie@readingshoulderunit.com)

**Mr Giuseppe Sforza, MD MCh(Orth)**

Secretary: Tania Sandham

Telephone: 07488 384479  
Fax: 0118 902 8138

e-mail: [tania@readingshoulderunit.com](mailto:tania@readingshoulderunit.com)

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### Reading Shoulder & Elbow Centre

**The Berkshire Independent Hospital**  
Swallows Croft, Wensley Road,  
Reading,  
RG1 6UZ

e-mail: [info@readingshoulderunit.com](mailto:info@readingshoulderunit.com)

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### Reading Shoulder & Elbow Centre

**Spire Dunedin Hospital**  
Bath Road,  
Reading, RG1 6UZ

**Professor Ofer Levy, MD MCh(Orth) FRCS**

Secretary: Cherie Emmitt

Telephone: 07367 582777

e-mail: [cherie@readingshoulderunit.com](mailto:cherie@readingshoulderunit.com)

**Mr Giuseppe Sforza, MD MCh(Orth)**

Secretary: Tania Sandham

Telephone: 07488 384479

e-mail: [tania@readingshoulderunit.com](mailto:tania@readingshoulderunit.com)

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### NHS:

**Reading Shoulder & Elbow Centre  
NHS Choose & Book -**

**The Berkshire Independent Hospital**  
Swallows Croft, Wensley Road,  
Reading, RG1 6UZ

Secretaries telephone: 0118 902 8116  
0118 902 8109

Fax: 0118 902 8138

e-mail: [NHS@readingshoulderunit.com](mailto:NHS@readingshoulderunit.com)

**Reading Shoulder & Elbow Centre  
NHS Choose & Book -**

**Spire Dunedin Hospital**  
Bath Road,  
Reading, RG1 6NS

Secretary: Tania Sandham

Telephone: 07488 384479

e-mail: [tania@readingshoulderunit.com](mailto:tania@readingshoulderunit.com)

**For patients' experiences see website:**

<http://www.readingshoulderunit.com/patient-information/feedback>

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