

# Physical Therapy for Reverse Total Shoulder Replacement

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This handout has information about your reverse total shoulder replacement and the exercises you will need to do after your surgery.

## Early Post Surgery Rehab (First 6 Weeks After Surgery):

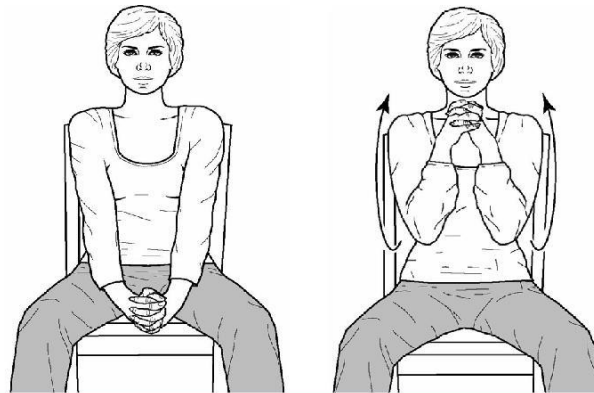
To protect, repair and maintain your range of motion, it is important for you to do the following during this time period:

- No active motion of shoulder.
- Wear sling at all times.
- Only move elbow, wrist and hand while wearing sling. (See exercises below)
- If your doctor says it is okay, you may do the exercises marked with an **asterisk (\*)** below.

## Exercises

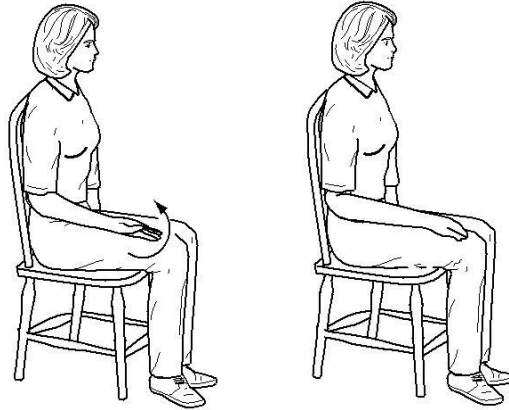
### Passive Elbow Range of Motion

1. Sit in a chair with your hands clasped. Use your good arm to bend the elbow of your surgery arm, bringing your hands to your chest.
2. Pause and then take your arms back down to the starting position.
3. Repeat 10 times. Do 2-3 times each day.



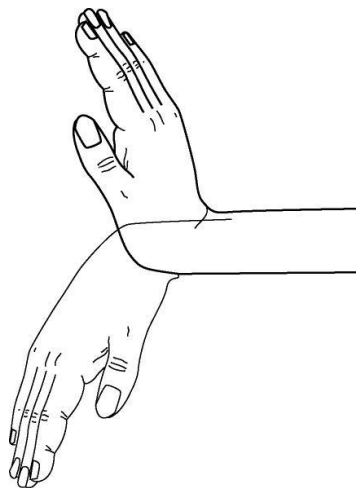
## Active Forearm Movement: Palm up and palm down

1. Sit in a chair with your lower arm on the surgery side resting on your thigh, palm facing up. Keep your elbow tucked in at your side while doing this exercise.
2. Turn your hand, so your palm faces down.
3. Turn your hand back to the starting position and repeat 10 times. Do 2-3 times each day.



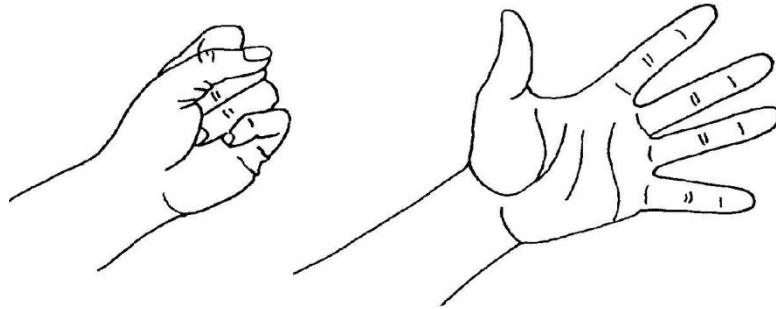
## Active Wrist Movement

1. Sit in a chair with your surgery arm resting on your thigh for support. Let your hand rest over the edge of your knee.
2. Bring your hand up toward the ceiling, so your fingers point up.
3. Then bend your hand down, so your fingers point to the floor.
4. Repeat 10 times. Do 2-3 times each day.



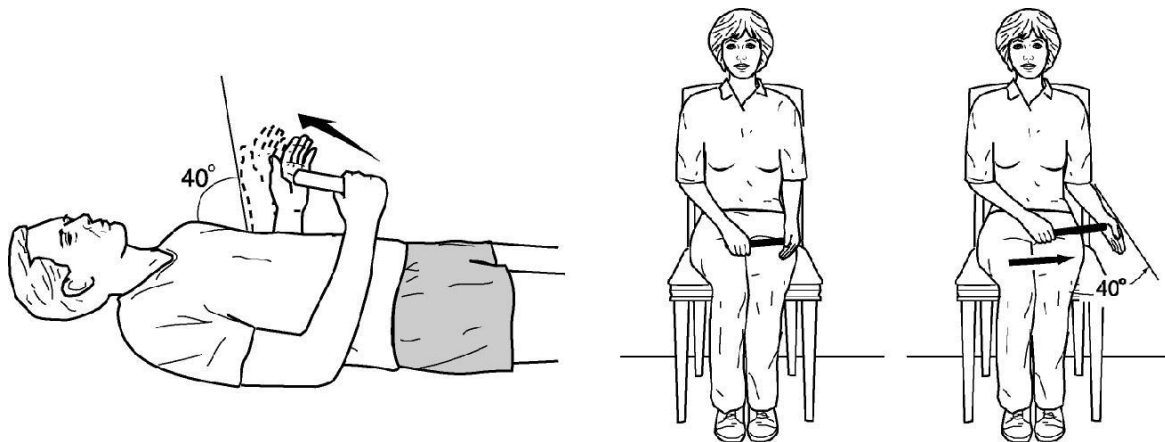
## Active Finger Movement

1. Sit in a chair with your lower arm on your surgery side resting on your thigh for support.
2. With your palm facing up, make a fist.
3. Straighten all your fingers.
4. Repeat 10 times. Do 2-3 times each day.



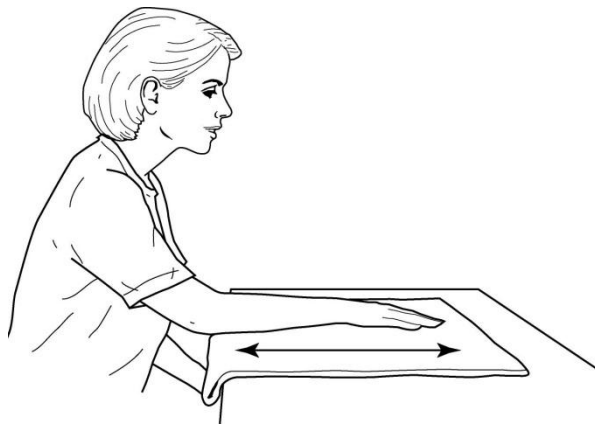
## \* Passive External Rotation with a Dowel Rod

1. Sit in a chair or lie on your back and bend your elbows to 90 degrees.
2. Hold a dowel rod/broom handle and keep your elbow bent and in close to your side.
3. Use your good arm to push your other arm out to the side with the dowel rod while keeping elbow tucked in to your side. Do not push your arm out any further than 40 degrees unless otherwise instructed. Hold stretch for 15 seconds.
4. Repeat 3-5 times. Do 3-5 times each day.



## \*Table Slide

1. Start by putting your chair next to a table.
2. Rest your arm on the table in a comfortable position. Table height should be below shoulder level.
3. Gently slide arm in front of you as your body is bending forward as if you were reaching for an item on the table. Hold stretch for 15 seconds and the slide arm back to starting position.
4. Repeat 3-5 times. Do 3-5 times each day.



## 6 Weeks to 3 Months After Surgery:

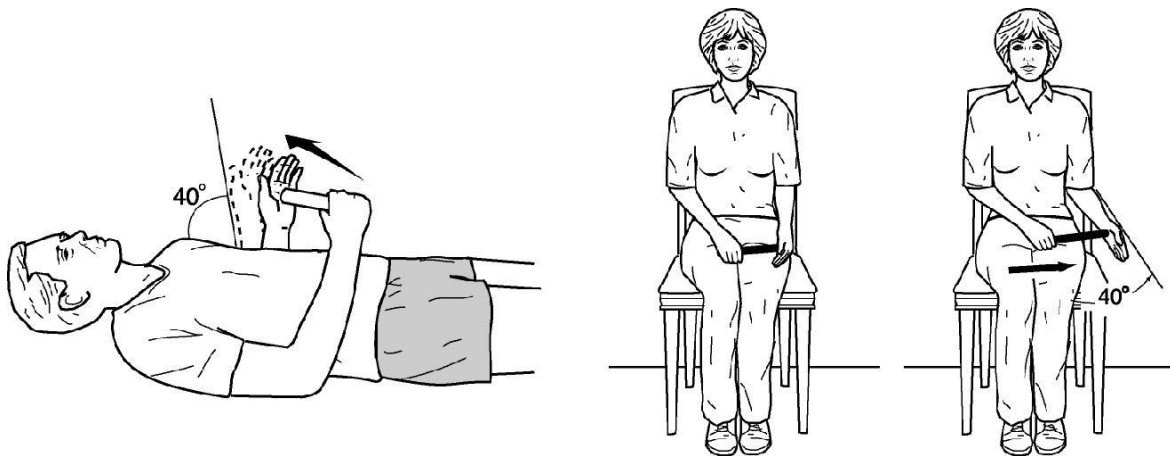
To regain range of motion, you may do the following during this time period:

- Sling may be removed.
- Active reaching of arm is okay.
- Do not lift anything heavier than fork/knife/toothbrush.
- Continue with previous exercises and begin gentle strengthening exercise with theraband. (See exercises below)
- Do strengthening exercises 1-2 times each day.

## Exercises

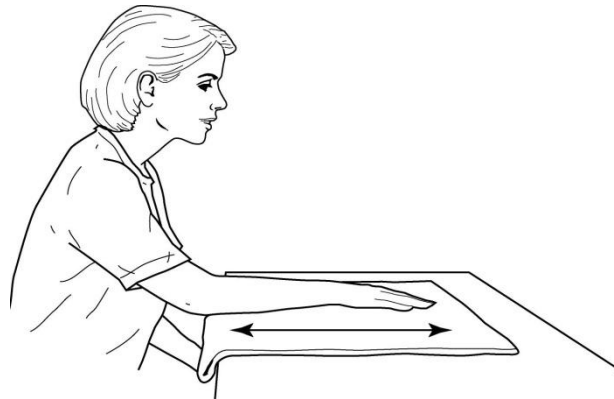
### Passive External Rotation with a Dowel Rod

1. Sit in a chair or lie on your back and bend your elbows to 90 degrees.
2. Hold a dowel rod/broom handle and keep your elbow bent and in close to your side.
3. Use your good arm to push your other arm out to the side with the dowel rod while keeping elbow tucked in to your side. Do not push your arm out any further than 40 degrees unless otherwise instructed. Hold stretch for 15 seconds.
4. Repeat 3-5 times. Do 3-5 times each day.



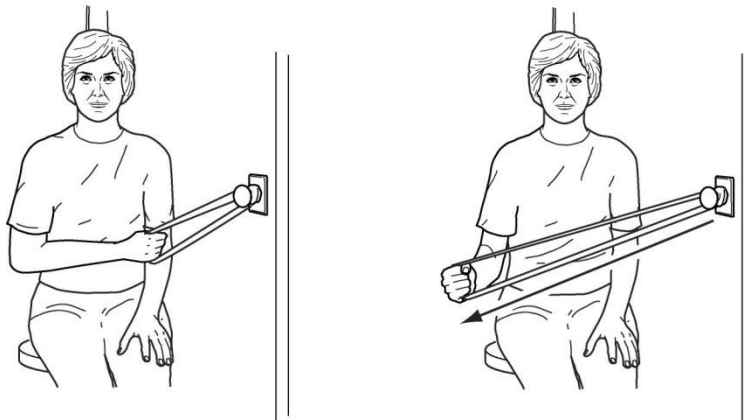
## Table Slides

1. Start by putting your chair next to a table.
2. Rest your arm on the table in a comfortable position. Table height should be below shoulder level.
3. Gently slide arm in front of you as your body is bending forward as if you were reaching for an item on the table. Hold stretch for 15 seconds and then slide arm back to starting position.
4. Repeat 3-5 times. Do 3-5 times each day.



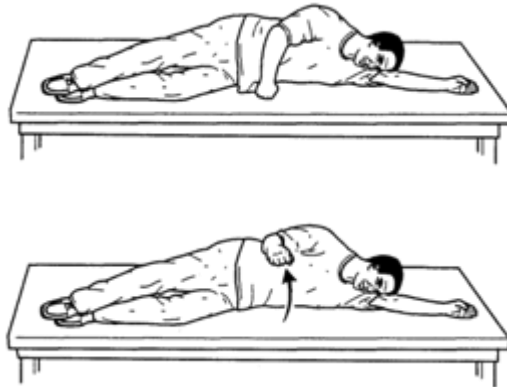
## Shoulder External Rotation

1. Attach the theraband at waist height.
2. Stand or sit on a stool with arms at your sides.
3. Hold the theraband in one hand with the elbow bent at 90 degrees and the arm across the front of your body.
4. Pull the theraband out across your body, keeping the elbow at your side. Forearm should be parallel with the floor.
5. Slowly return to the start and relax.
6. Repeat 10 times. Do 1-2 times each day.



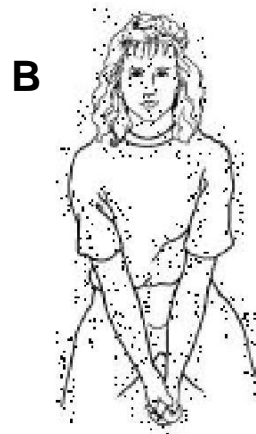
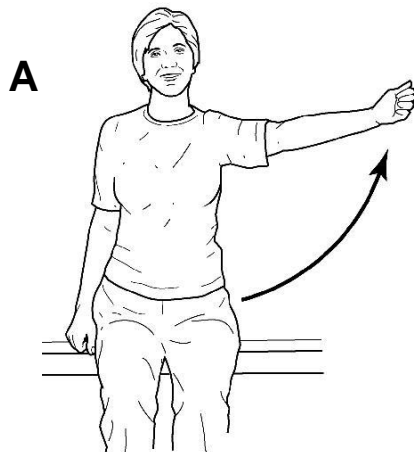
## Alternative of Shoulder External Rotation

1. If sitting/standing using theraband for external rotation exercise is too difficult you may do the exercise lying on your good side with the arm on the surgery side closest to ceiling.
2. Have your upper arm at your side with the elbow bent at 90 degrees, so the hand is on the floor or table.
3. With the upper arm fixed at your side, raise your hand up to shoulder level.
4. Hold and then lower to starting point.
5. Repeat 10 times. Do 1-2 times each day.



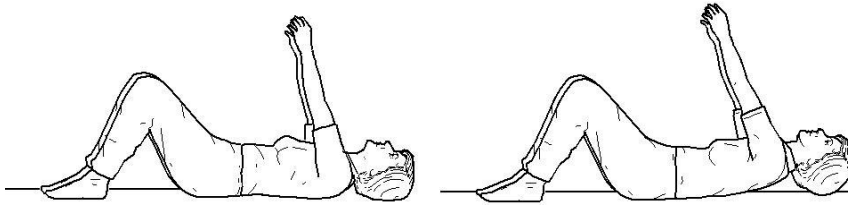
## Shoulder Raise

1. Sit or lie down with your elbows to your side and thumbs up.
2. **(Option A)**  
Raise your arm to shoulder level away from your body. Hold and then slowly bring your arm down.
- (Option B)**  
You may need to use your good arm to help raise your arm on the surgery side. Hold and then slowly bring your arm down.
3. Relax and repeat 10 times. Do 1-2 times each day.



## Ceiling Punches/Circles

1. Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor.
2. Keep your arm on the surgery side straight and raise it toward the ceiling.
3. Reach your arm up toward ceiling by raising your shoulder from the floor.
4. You may progress to adding arm circles in this position.
5. Repeat 10 times. Do 1-2 times each day.





## 3 Months After Surgery:

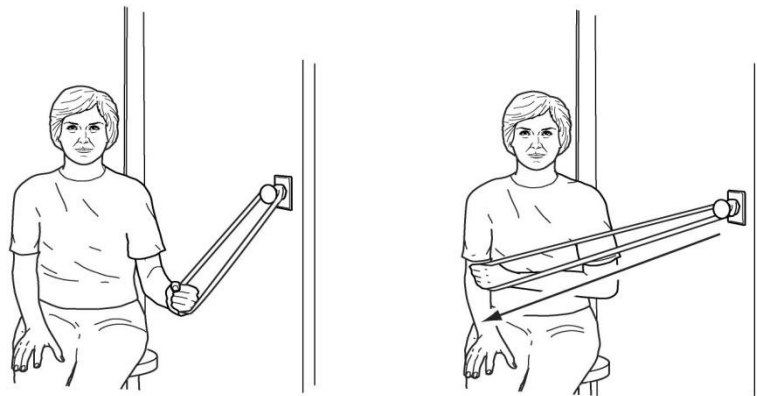
To strengthen your shoulder, you may do the following during this time:

- Have formal physical therapy for more progression.
- Focus on recovery of strength.
- Continue with previous exercises and add exercises below.
- **Do not** lift anything more than 10 pounds and limit reaching overhead to once and a while.

## Exercises

### Shoulder Internal Rotation

1. Put a the theraband on a door knob at waist level.
2. Use the arm next to the band and keep your elbow tucked in at your side.
3. Turn your arm inward across your body. Keep your forearm parallel to the floor.
4. Slowly return to the start and relax.
5. Repeat 10 times. Do 1-2 times each day.



## Shoulder Blade Squeeze

1. With your arms bent at the elbows and elbows tucked in at your sides.
2. Pull and squeeze shoulder blades together and then relax.
3. Try not to lift shoulder up towards your ears.
4. You may progress by putting a theraband around a doorknob and pulling the theraband as you squeeze your shoulder blades together.
5. Repeat 10 times. Do 1-2 times each day.



## 4 Months After Surgery and Longer

- For the rest of your life, **do not** lift anything more than 15 pounds with your arm on the surgery side.
- Continue to progress with recovery of strength.
- Use exercise program to maintain mobility and strength.

### Physical Therapy for Reverse Total Shoulder Replacement

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**This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.**

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