

Physiotherapy department

Physiotherapy advice for patients following thoracic surgery

This leaflet has been designed to help speed up your recovery and prevent any problems with long-term shoulder stiffness following your lung surgery.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to the doctor, nurse or physiotherapist caring for you.

After surgery

Many people experience some pain after their surgery and you will be given medication to help with this. You should be comfortable enough to cough, and to move around freely after your surgery and it is important to do this to help you recover. If pain is stopping you from doing either of these things, please ask your nurse for more pain relief.

Coughing

- It is very important that you are able to cough properly following your surgery, so that you can keep your chest clear of any phlegm that may build up after your surgery.
- Some people find it useful to hold a towel or pillow to your wound when coughing, as this can make it more comfortable.
- If you cannot cough properly because of pain, please ask your nurse for some more pain relief.

Walking

- Walking is very important to aid your recovery after surgery, and we expect you to be up and walking around the ward during your hospital stay.
- You should walk the length of the ward and back, or further, each day. Try to walk at a pace that leaves you slightly short of breath. If you are unable to move away from your bed space, you should march on the spot instead until you feel slightly breathless.

Shoulder and back exercises

Some people experience stiffness and pain in their shoulder after lung surgery. It is important that you try to keep your arms moving as much as possible.

Some of the exercises below may cause discomfort, and a stretching feeling, but it is important to remember that they will get easier, and that they will speed up the healing process. If it is too sore to do the exercises below, please ask your nurse for more pain relief.

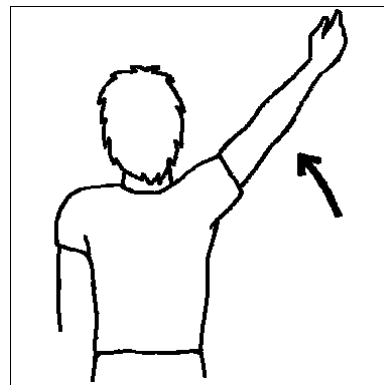
The exercises should be done 3–4 times a day, particularly on the first day after your operation and while you have chest drains in.

The exercises can be done for both sides of the body, but particularly **concentrate on the side that you have chest drains in.**



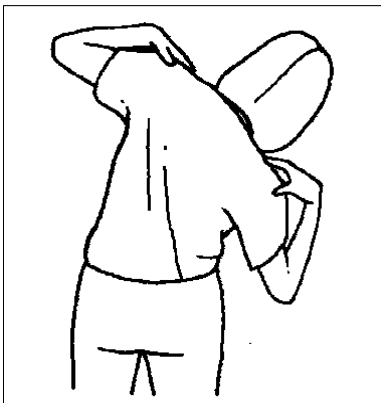
2.

- Keeping your arm straight, lift your arm up above your head as high as you can.
- Repeat five times.



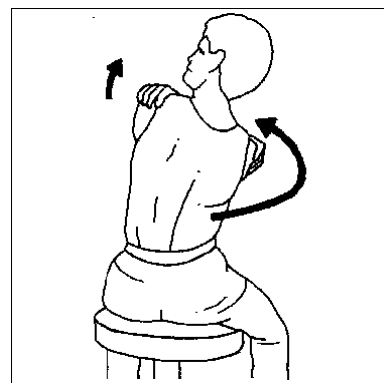
1.

- Lift your arm out to the side and up above your head.
- Repeat five times.



3.

- Put your hands behind your neck or across your chest.
- Slowly bend from side to side.
- Repeat five times.



4.

- Cross your arms across your chest.
- Slowly turn your body as if trying to look behind you, one way, and then the other.
- Repeat five times.

Exercise daily diary

You should use the exercise diary below to record when you have done your exercises:

Day	1			2			3		
	AM	PM	Evening	AM	PM	Evening	AM	PM	Evening
Shoulder and back exercises									
Walking									

Day	4			5			6		
	AM	PM	Evening	AM	PM	Evening	AM	PM	Evening
Shoulder and back exercises									
Walking									

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about this leaflet or about the physiotherapy you will receive during your admission, please contact the ward physiotherapist for your ward, **Monday to Friday, between 8.30am and 4.30pm**

For **Dorcas Ward** admissions: call **020 7188 3026** and ask for **Bleep: 2006**.

For **Nuffield House** admissions: call **020 7188 3026** and ask for **Bleep: 1338**.

Useful sources of information

Pharmacy medicines helpline

For information about any medicines that you have been prescribed at Guy's and St Thomas' hospitals, you can speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

t: 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

To make comments or raise concerns about the Trust's services, please contact PALS. Ask a member of staff to direct you to the PALS office or:

e: 020 7188 8801 at St Thomas' **t:** 020 7188 8803 at Guy's **e:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk

Knowledge & Information Centre (KIC)

For more information about health conditions, support groups and local services, or to search the internet and send emails, please visit the KIC on the Ground Floor, North Wing, St Thomas' Hospital.
t: 020 7188 3416

Language support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch using the following contact details.
t: 020 7188 8815 **fax:** 020 7188 5953

NHS Choices

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.

w: www.nhs.uk

Become a member of your local hospitals, and help shape our future

Membership is free and it is completely up to you how much you get involved. To become a member of our Foundation Trust, you need to be 18 years of age or over, live in Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham, Wandsworth or Westminster or have been a patient at either hospital in the last five years.

To join, please call 0848 143 4017, email members@gstt.nhs.uk or visit www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk