

After Breast Surgery Exercises



Pacing

Pacing is key to recovery after any surgery. Fatigue is normal at first. Surgery will slow you down and may frustrate you because the body is using its energy to heal. Do not try to do everything all at once.

Pain

It is normal to have post-surgical discomfort or pain requiring treatment. You will have medication to assist with pain control. Don't be afraid to take it as prescribed, as it can help to increase your activities with less discomfort.

Stretching Exercises

Muscle pain is normal and it can be reversed with a little time and effort spent slowly stretching the tissue to its normal length. Stretches may be done to discomfort, but not to pain.

From surgery until first post-surgery visit, begin with:

Balance activity and rest

Walking

Do not raise your heart rate or exercise to sweating.

Diaphragmatic breathing (deep breaths)

- First 2-3 days take 5-10 deep breaths every 1-2 hours while awake.
- 4 days to first appointment—deep breaths several times per day.

90-degree shoulder movement restriction

- Arms out straight to sides at 90 degree angle.
- You may use, raise the lower part of your arm (elbow to hand).

Modified shoulder movement

Back and forth, 3-4 times per day.

Shoulder circles

Roll your shoulders forward and backward slowly.

Try to make the circles as round as you can without forcing any movement. The lower and backward parts of the circle are the hardest. Repeat 5 times each direction, 3-4 times per day.

After your first post-surgery visit, please add:

Shoulder circles

Physical therapy referral, if needed to

HGH or FMT OR ALH _____

Shoulder pendulum

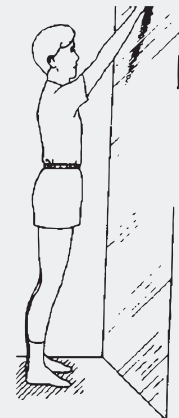
Bend at your waist with your surgical-side hand hanging down and your other arm supporting your upper body on a table. Relax your arm completely until it feels “heavy.” Swing your arm forward and backward, back and forth across the body, and in circles. Repeat 5-10 times each direction.



Shoulder Flexion—Finger Wall Walk

Stand facing the wall. Walk the fingers of your surgical hand up the wall. Step closer to the wall as needed. Mark your progress with a pencil on the wall and challenge yourself to go a little higher each day. Slowly lower your arm using your other hand until you can use your shoulder muscles as a break against gravity.

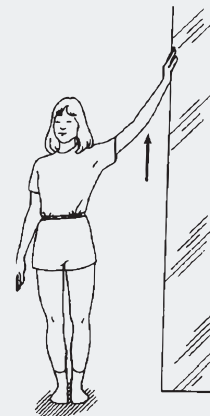
Repeat 5 times.



Shoulder Abduction—Finger Wall Walk

Stand with your surgical side to the wall. Walk your fingers up the wall. Step into the wall as needed. Mark your progress with a pencil on the wall and challenge yourself to go a little higher each day. Slowly lower your arm using the other hand until you can use your shoulder muscles as a break against gravity.

Repeat 5 times.



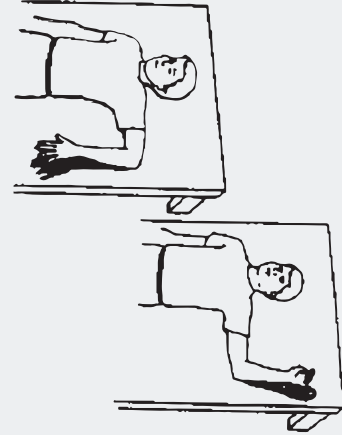
Internal and External Shoulder Rotation

Lie on your back with your knees bent for comfort. Move your arm out away from your body as far as tolerated. Ninety degrees is the goal. Let the palm of your hand fall toward the bed or floor until it touches (90 degrees). Hold for 10 counts. Return to start.

Repeat 5 times.

Now let the back of your hand fall toward the bed or floor without lifting your back or shoulder. It will not touch the bed or floor (70 degrees). Hold for 10 count. Return to start.

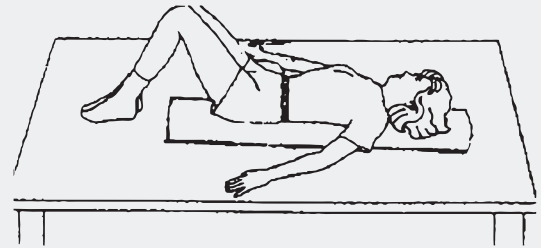
Repeat 5 times.



Roller Chest Stretch

Roll up blankets or large towels to make a roller 36" long and greater than 6" in diameter. Lie down on the length of the roller with your knees bent. Keep your head on the roller. Move your arms away from your side, but still in contact with the floor. Feel a stretch in your upper chest and shoulder region. The goal is to stretch 90 degrees from the side.

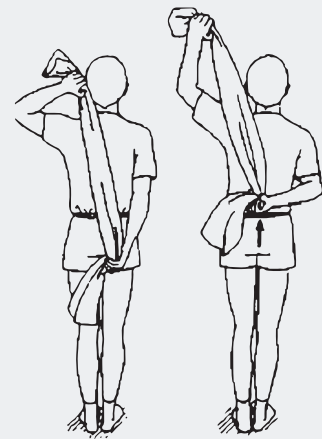
Hold for 1 song on the radio or relaxation tape.



Hand Behind Back Towel Stretch

Grasp a towel behind your back with your surgical side being the lower hand. Gently pull your lower hand up your back. Hold for 10 count.

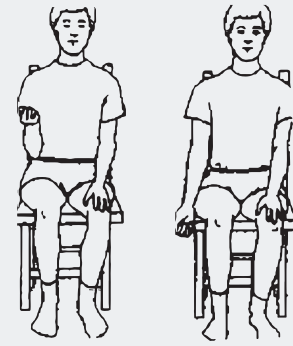
Repeat 5 times.



Bicep Arm Curls

Sit in a kitchen chair with your arm hanging down. Slowly bend your elbow until your hand is close to touching your shoulder. Return your hand to your side.

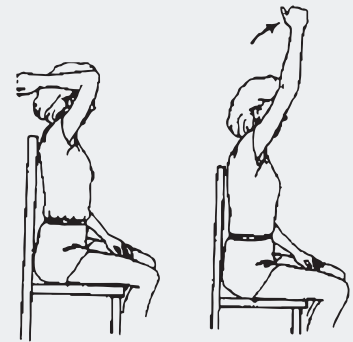
Repeat 10 times on each side.



Tricep Elbow Straightening

Hold your arm near your side and lean over the side of a table with your non-surgical side lightly supporting your trunk. Slowly bend and straighten and bend your elbow, but do not allow your shoulder to move.

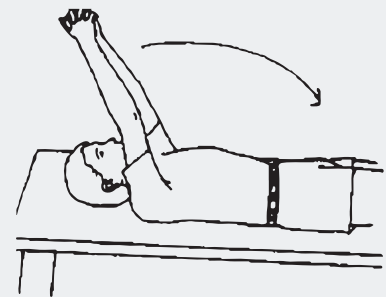
Repeat 10 times.



Overhead Pull Downs

Lie on your back with your knees bent. Bring your arms up over your head, keeping your arms close to your ears. Bring your arms down toward your stomach and then return them to above your head. Start with no weight.

Repeat 10 times.



Self-Massage

All tissue that has been injured goes through stages of healing. As the healing process continues, it is not unusual for the tissues to get tight and inflexible. Surgical scars, no matter where they are, can be a problem. They tend to bind to the layers of soft tissue under them. However, you can decrease this binding and mobilize the scar(s) by simply moving the tissue and massaging the area.

