

Total Shoulder Replacement

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The aim of a total shoulder replacement is to reduce pain, improve function, improve overall quality of life and mobility. Overall success rate is 95%.

What to Expect

- 2-3 days in hospital
- 2 weeks of swelling and discomfort requiring significant pain killers
- 2-4 weeks in a sling
- 6-12 weeks for reasonable recovery
- 6-12 months for a good to full recovery

Possible Complications of Surgery

- Wound infection
- Deep joint infection
- Deep vein thrombosis (DVT)
- Fracture
- Nerve injury
- Component failure
- Revision surgery
- Dislocation
- Limb loss in extreme circumstances
- Heart attack
- Chest infection
- Pulmonary embolism

Risks

- 5% chance of minor complication
- 1% chance of serious complication
- Risk of dissatisfaction with the outcome of surgery
- Extremely rare chance of death

Post Operation Wound Care

- Keep wool and crepe bandages on for 24 hours after the operation.
- Keep wounds clean, dry and covered for 2 weeks or until the wound is completely healed. If the dressings get soaked through, they will need to be changed.
- Do not soak the incision (ie. bath or pool) until the wound is completely healed.
- Mr Spencer mainly uses dissolvable stitches.
- If you have any concerns about your wound please contact Mr Spencer's rooms.

After your Shoulder Replacement: A Rehabilitation Guide

The time frames below are approximate, vary between individuals and are best guided by Mr Spencer or your Physiotherapist. Exercises should be performed within pain and comfort. Notes below in italics are guidelines intended for your Physiotherapist.

Weeks 0-6

- Wear sling for 4-6 weeks, then wean off.
- Avoid lifting anything heavy for 3 months.
- Ensure you take adequate pain relief medication.
- You can use ice for 15-20 minutes, 1-3 times/day for pain relief (including after set exercises). The pendular exercise can also reduce aching.
- Sleeping: Keep your sling on and try using pillows in different positions to support your arm so that you are comfortable and relaxed. You may find sitting semi-reclined more comfortable initially when sleeping.
- You may be able to return to work (in a non-physical role) from 4-6 weeks (as comfort allows). If you have a manual labour based job, you will need to discuss this further with Mr Spencer.
- Remove sling to do exercises 1-3 times/day (a good time is straight after a shower and/or half an hour after pain relief medication).
- Exercises should be within pain and comfort and include: *Pendular exercises, elbow bending/straightening (ensure elbow straightening maintained whilst in sling), hand open/close, wrist flexion/extension and supination/pronation, scapular mobilisation – elevation and retraction. Passive shoulder flexion to 90 degrees and external rotation to neutral.*
- *You can attend a Physiotherapist for treatment from 4 weeks onwards. This may include Hydrotherapy (pool) exercises once your wound is completely healed.*
- *Restrictions for 6 weeks: No Abduction, No Flexion past 90 degrees and No External Rotation past neutral. No lifting anything heavier than a cup of tea.*

Weeks 6-12

- Drive when you feel safe and competent to do so (not before 4 weeks and you must be out of the sling). Before returning to driving, you should contact your insurance company to ensure you are covered to drive.
- Use your arm for activities of daily living (within pain and comfort).
- No heavy lifting.
- *You can return to a walking programme and/or stationary bike for cardiovascular exercise if desired. It should be pain free and preferably guided by a Physiotherapist.*
- *Active assisted exercises from 6 weeks, progressing to active exercises as able.*
- *Progress shoulder range within pain and comfort.*
- *Start isometric strengthening exercises from 6 weeks (initially below shoulder height).*

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Week 12+

- At 3-4 months you can attempt swimming a gentle modified breaststroke. It should be pain free and comfortable.
- At 4-6 months you can return to activities such as golf and gardening. Discuss your return to activity with Mr Spencer.
- Tennis and long distance swimming are not advocated after a Shoulder Replacement.
- You can return to a Gym from 6-12 months. Ensure that the weights are always in front of you.
- Your shoulder can continue to improve for up to a year.
- *Rehabilitation: Continue to aim towards a good active range of movement of the shoulder.*
- *Start resistance exercises for strength (pain free) throughout the available range.*
- *Scapula stabilization and shoulder proprioception exercises with an emphasis on being functionally based.*