

## RECOVERY

# Shoulder Surgery Exercise Guide

*This content was written and/or reviewed by a member of American Shoulder and Elbow Surgeons (ASES).*

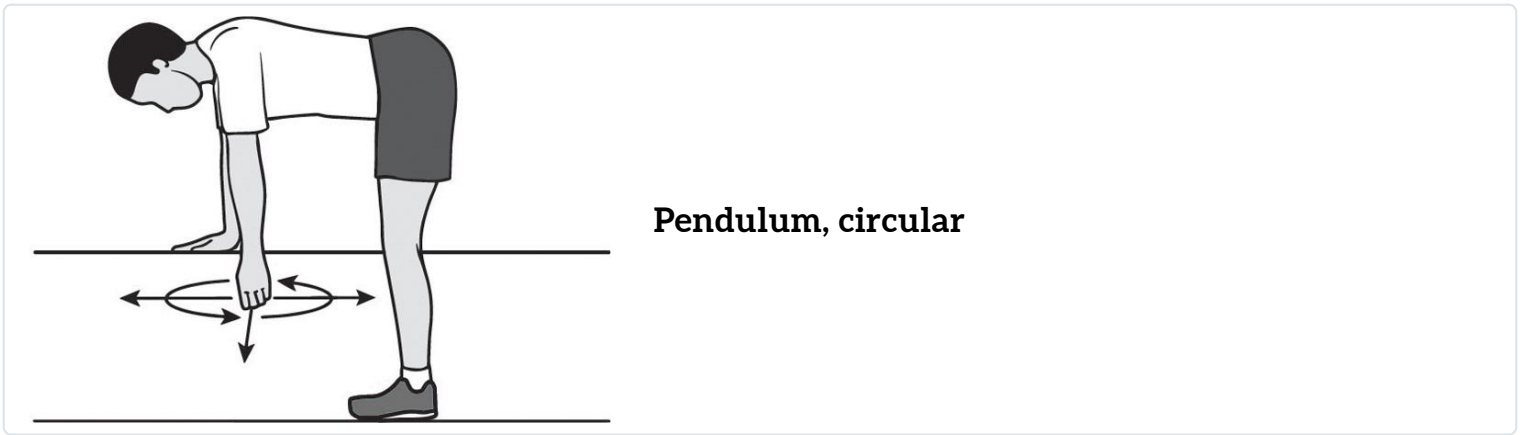
Regular exercises to restore motion and flexibility to your shoulder and a gradual return to your everyday activities are important for your full recovery after shoulder surgery.

Your orthopaedic surgeon and physical therapist may recommend that you exercise for 10 to 15 minutes, 2 or 3 times a day during your early recovery period. They may suggest some of the exercises included in this guide. They may also recommend additional exercises to help prevent stiffness in your elbow and hand.

Check with your physical therapist or orthopaedic surgeon before performing any of the exercises shown below. In addition, remember to always use pain as your guide when exercising. Doing too much, too soon may delay healing.

## Pendulum, Circular (Codman's Exercises)

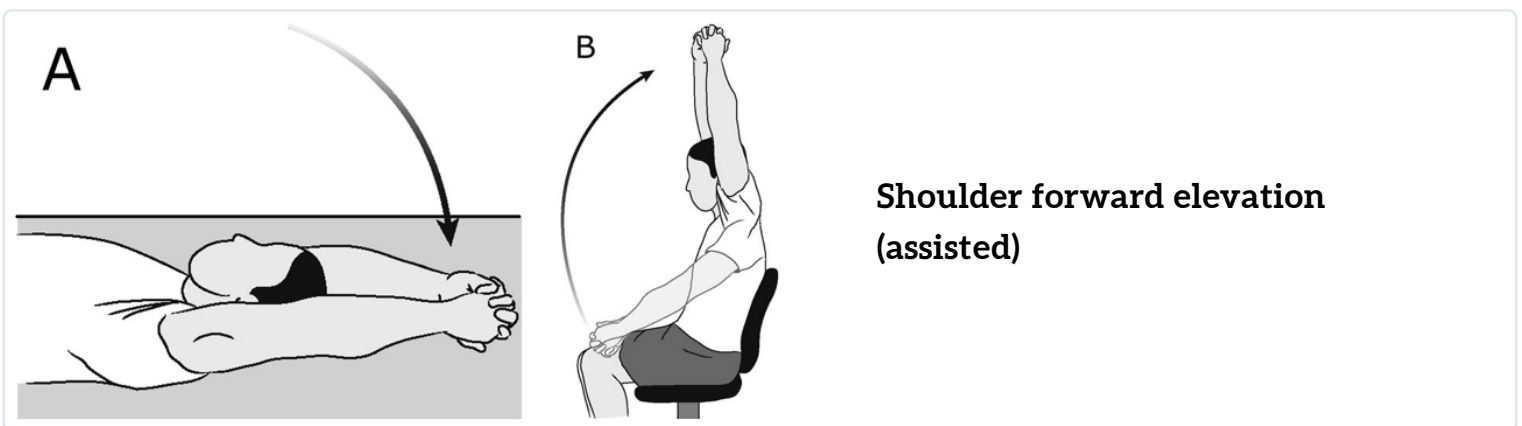
- Bend forward 90° at the waist, placing your uninvolved hand on a table for support.
- Rock your body in a circular pattern to move your arm clockwise 10 times, then counterclockwise 10 times. Keep your arm relaxed during the exercise. The circle your hand is making should be about 1 to 2 feet wide. The circular pendular movement should occur through your shoulder joint.
- Do 3 sessions a day.



## Shoulder Forward Elevation (Assisted)

This exercise can be done either lying down (A) or sitting down (B).

- Clasp your hands together and lift your arms above your head. Keep your elbows as straight as possible. Maintain the elevation for 10 to 20 seconds.
- Slowly lower your arms.
- Repeat 10 to 20 times per session.
- Do 3 sessions a day.
- Slowly increase the elevation of your arms as the days progress, using pain as your guide.



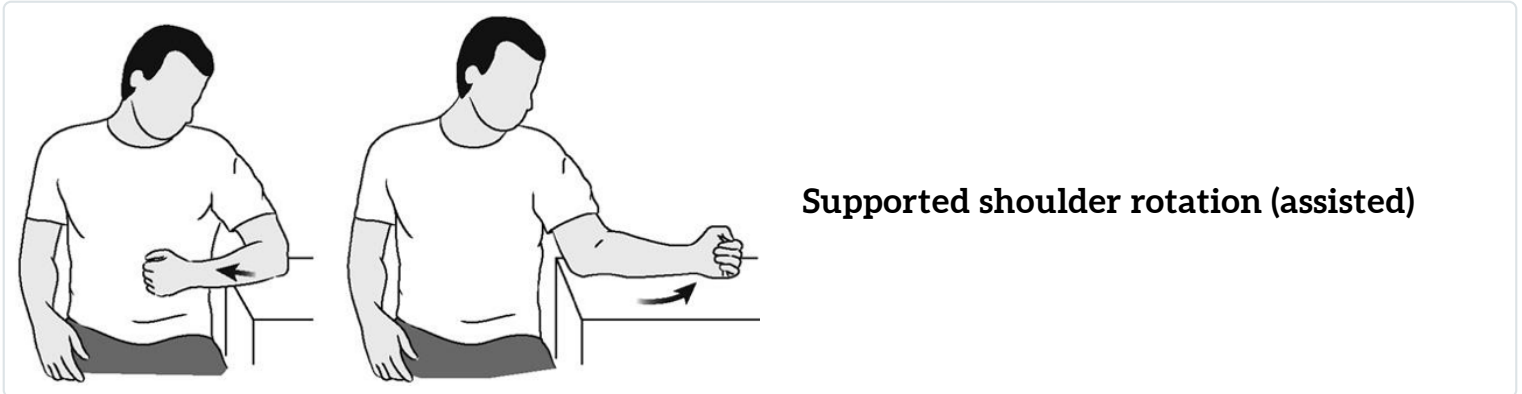
## Supported Shoulder Rotation (Assisted)

- Keep your elbow in place and your shoulder blades down and together.
- Slide your forearm back and forth, as shown. You can also perform this exercise using a

stick or cane to assist your arm outward (keeping your elbow at your side).

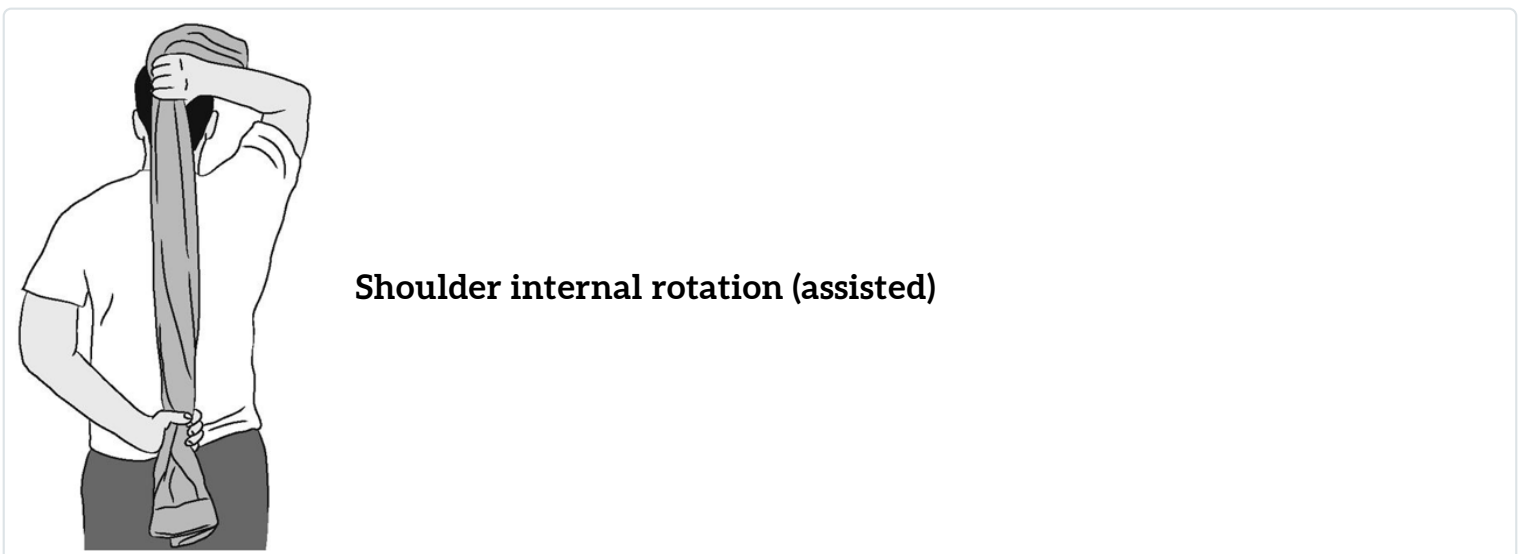
- Repeat 10 times per session.
- Do 3 sessions a day.

**Note:** Your surgeon may restrict the degree of outward movement (external rotation) of your operated shoulder after surgery. Before performing this exercise, check with your surgeon or physical therapist to determine if you have an external rotation limit.



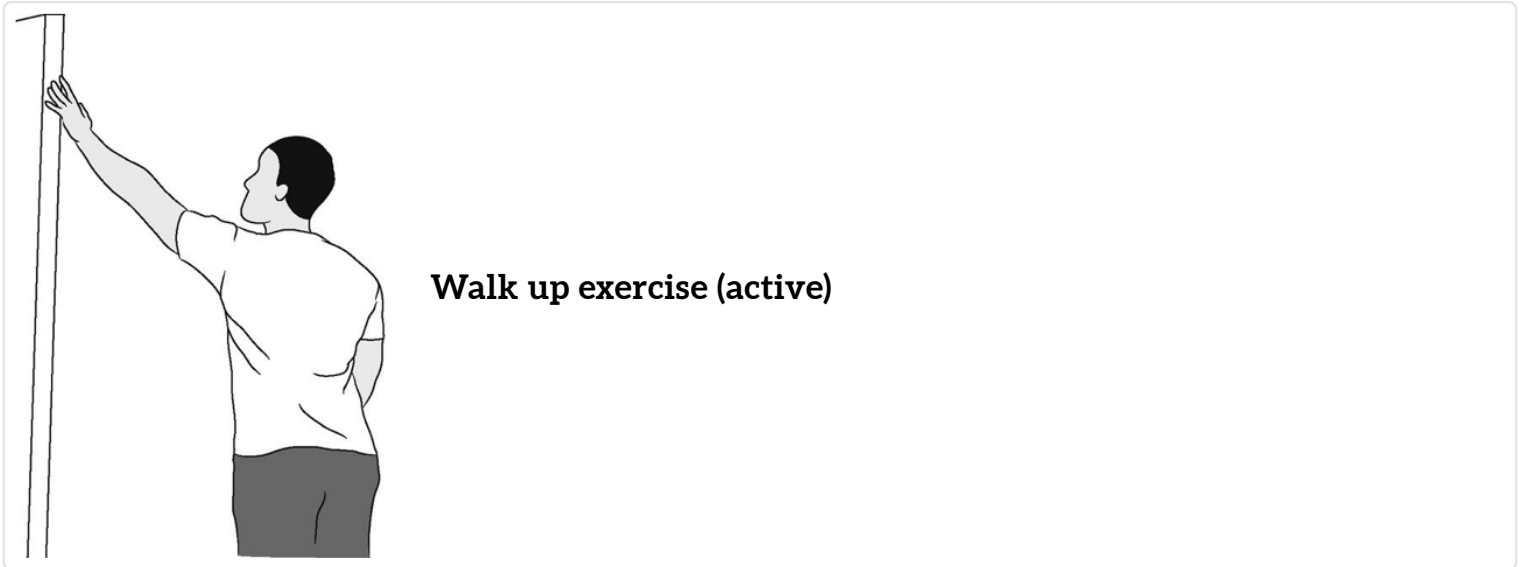
## Shoulder Internal Rotation (Assisted)

- Use your other hand or a towel to help bring your involved hand behind your back and across to the opposite side.
- Repeat 10 times per session.
- Do 3 sessions a day.



## Walk Up Exercise (Active)

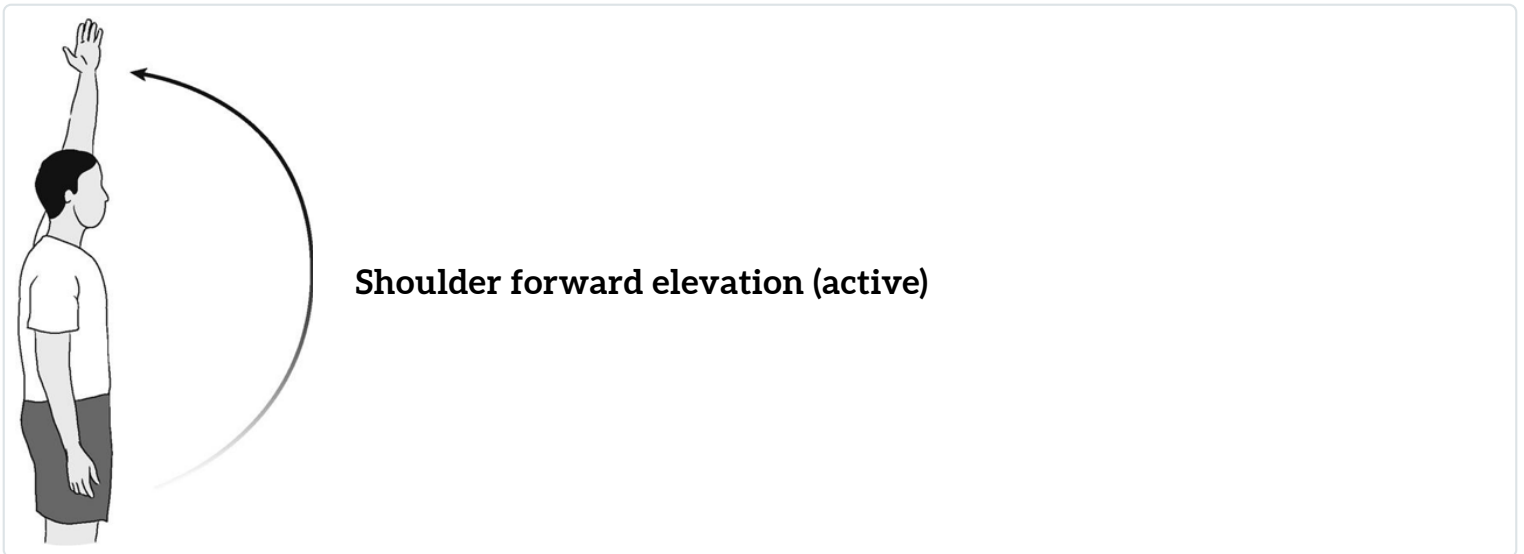
- With your elbow straight, use your fingers to "crawl" up a wall or door frame as far as possible. Hold for 10 to 20 seconds.
- Repeat 5 to 10 times per session.
- Do 3 sessions a day.



## Shoulder Forward Elevation (Active)

- Raise your arm upward to point to the ceiling, keeping your elbows straight and leading with your thumb, as shown. Hold for 10 seconds.
- Repeat 5 to 10 times per session.
- Do 3 sessions a day.

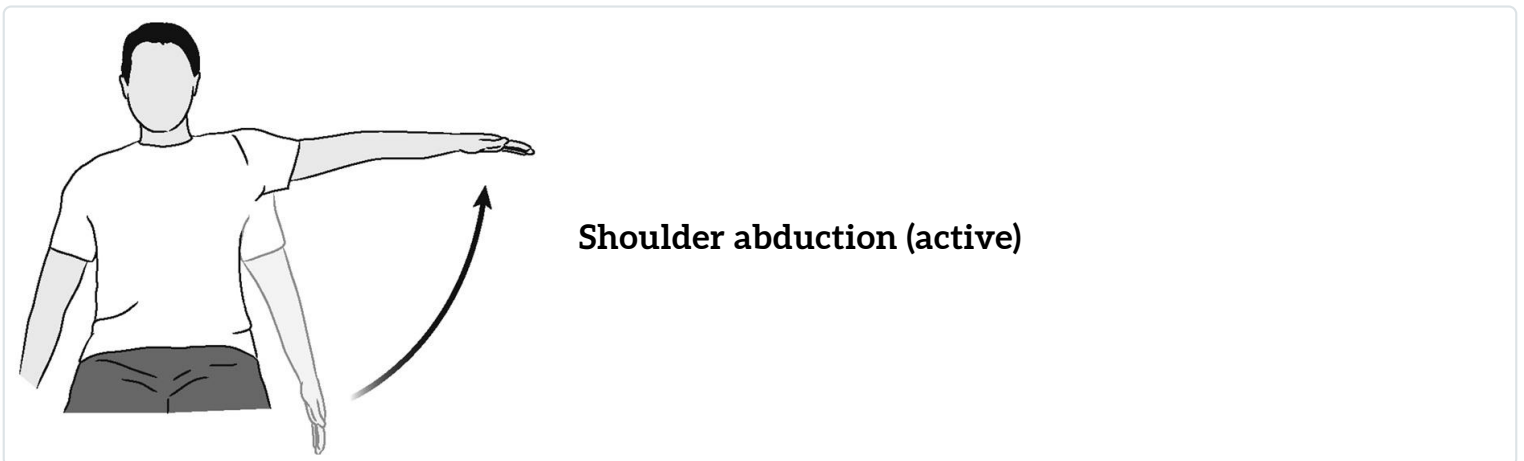
**Tip:** Avoid shrugging or bringing up your shoulder blade. It may be beneficial to watch yourself do this exercise in front of a mirror.



## Shoulder Abduction (Active)

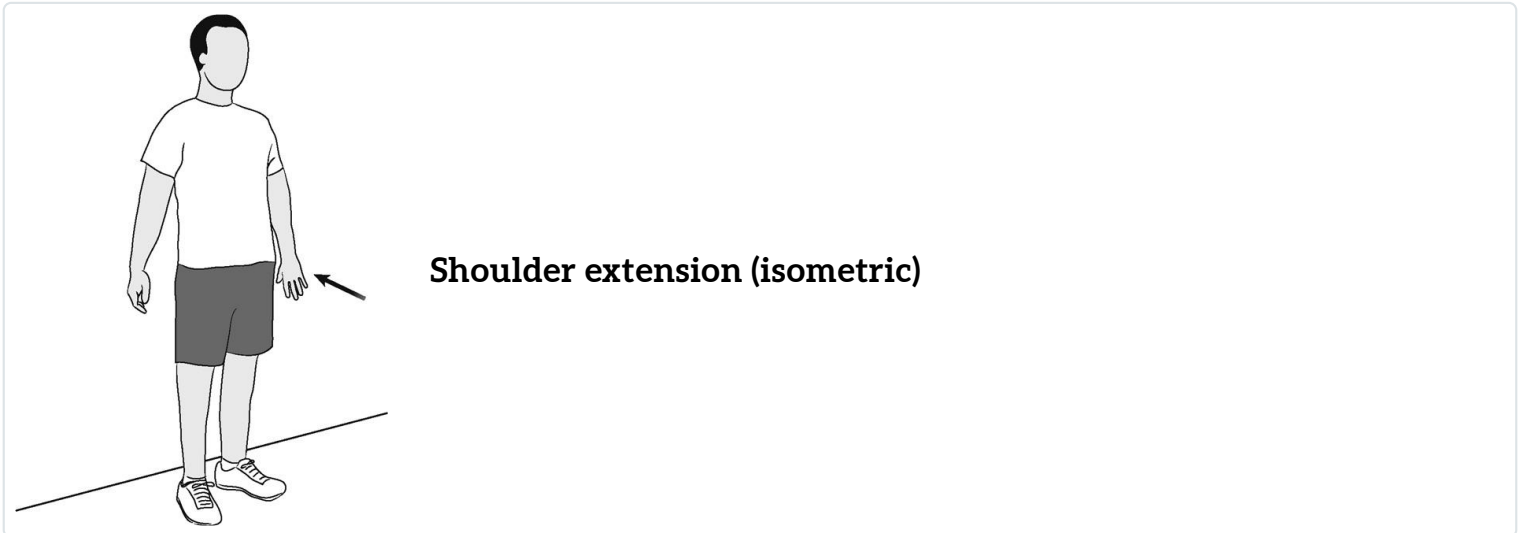
- Raise your arm out to the side, with your elbow straight and your palm downward. Do not shrug your shoulder or tilt your trunk.
- Repeat 3 times per session.
- Do 3 sessions a day.

Note: This exercise may not be recommended after certain surgeries. Check with your surgeon or physical therapist to ensure that it is appropriate for you.



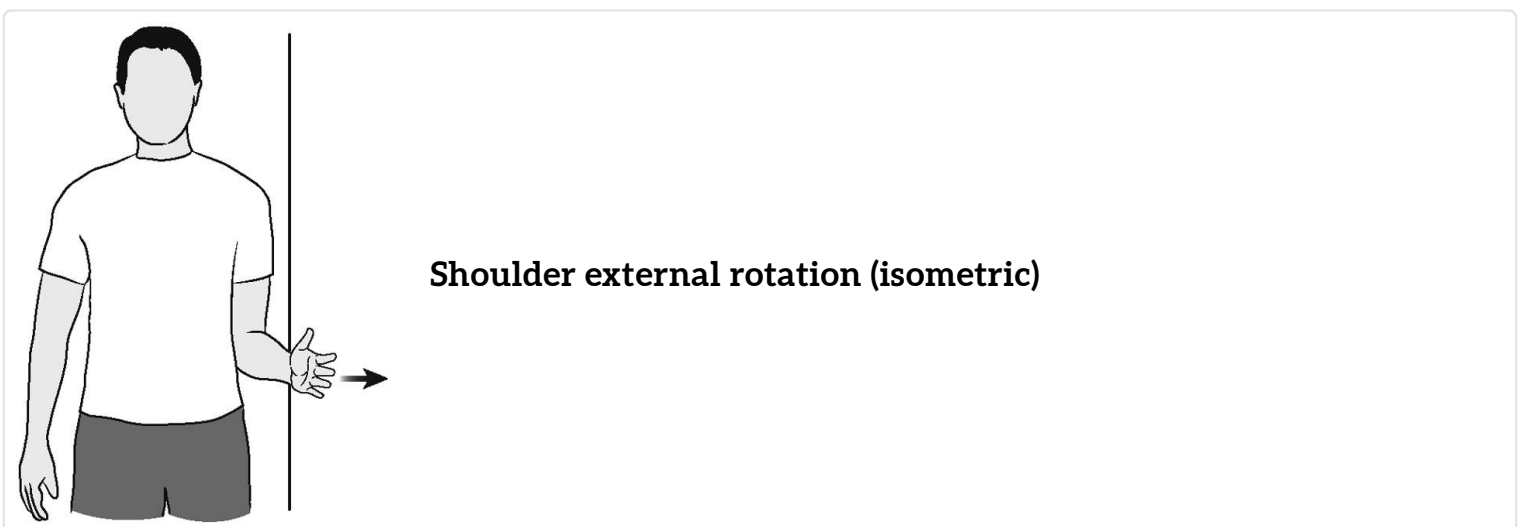
## Shoulder Extension (Isometric)

- Stand with your back against the wall and your arms straight at your sides.
- Keeping your elbows straight, push your arms back into the wall. Hold for 5 seconds, and then relax.
- Repeat 5 to 10 times per session.
- Do 3 sessions a day.



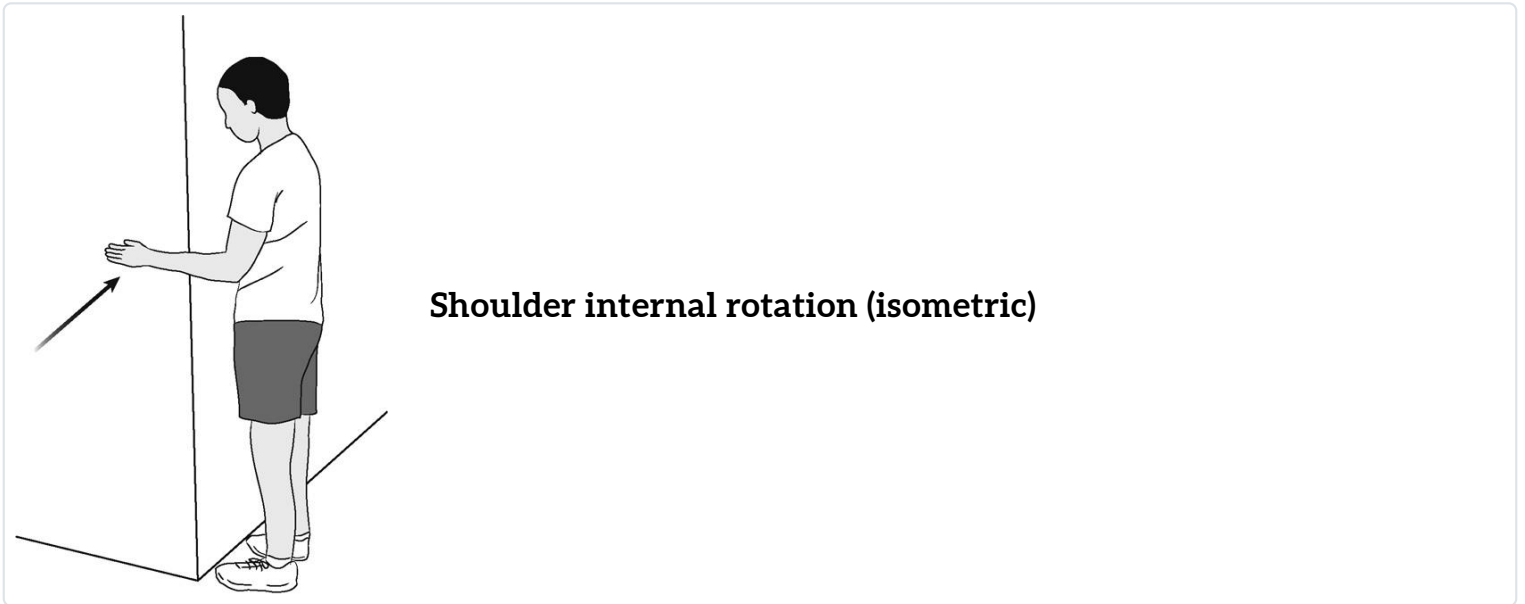
## Shoulder External Rotation (Isometric)

- Stand with the involved side of your body against a wall. Bend your elbow 90°.
- Push the back of your hand slowly into the wall. Hold for 5 seconds, and then relax.
- Repeat 10 times per session.
- Do 3 sessions a day.



# Shoulder Internal Rotation (Isometric)

- Stand at a corner of a wall or in a door frame. Place your involved arm against the wall around the corner, bending your elbow 90°.
- Push the palm of your hand into the wall. Hold for 5 seconds, and then relax.
- Repeat 10 times per session.
- Do 3 sessions a day.



# Shoulder Adduction (Isometric)

- Place a small pillow between your inner arm and the side of your chest, as shown.
- With your arm, squeeze the pillow against the side of your chest. Hold for 5 seconds, and then relax.
- Repeat 10 times per session.
- Do 3 sessions a day.



**Shoulder adduction (isometric)**

## Shoulder Abduction (Isometric)

- Resisting upward motion to the side, slowly and gently push your arm against the back of a sturdy chair or sofa. Hold for 5 seconds, and then relax.
- Repeat 10 times per session.
- Do 3 sessions a day.

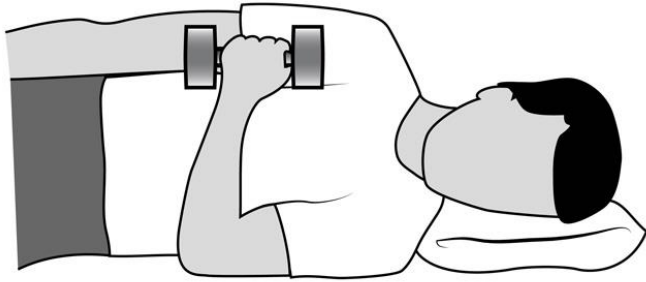


**Shoulder abduction (isometric)**

## Shoulder Internal Rotation (Strengthening)

- Lie on your involved side. Keep your elbow bent at 90°.

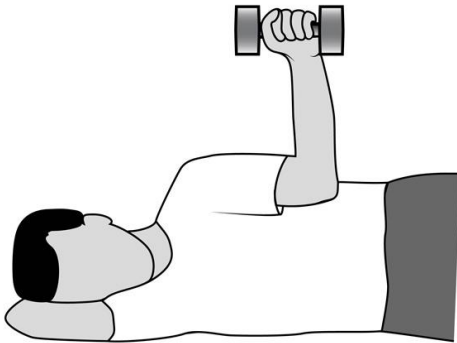
- Holding a light weight, raise your hand toward your stomach. Slowly return.
- Repeat 10 times per session.
- Do 3 sessions a day.



Shoulder internal rotation (strengthening)

## Shoulder External Rotation (Strengthening)

- Lie on your uninvolved side. Keep your elbow bent at 90°.
- Holding a light weight, raise your hand away from your stomach. Slowly return.
- Repeat 10 times per session.
- Do 3 sessions a day.



Shoulder external rotation (strengthening)



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