

Exercises for Patients with Altered Nerve Function to the Shoulder following Neck Dissection and / or Radiotherapy Treatment

Patient Information Series No 47a

These exercises should initially only be done under the supervision of your physiotherapist to ensure that they are suitable for you. If you are at all unsure of how to do them, please contact your physiotherapist before continuing.

Please continue with all your other exercises in the Head and Neck booklet **with the exception of exercise 7** of the shoulder exercises.

The exercises should be carried out in a warm environment and in comfortable, loose clothing. Keep an upright posture where appropriate, with your shoulders in a good position. This is important for the training of the correct muscles which will help to compensate for the altered movement in your shoulder and shoulder blade.

Try to do the exercises at least three times a day

Do each exercise times - slowly and carefully

- Exercise 1: Leaning with your body weight over your arms and elbows straight, push into table or surface. Hold 3 seconds and relax.
- Exercise 2: Sit or stand. Attach theraband at arm's length slightly above your head. Pull band down until your elbow is level with your body. Hold 3 seconds and relax.
- Exercise 3: Lying on your tummy, keep arms straight by your sides. Pull shoulder blades together and lift shoulders off bed, then lift your hand a few centimetres off the bed, keeping your arm level with your body. Hold 3 seconds and relax.
- Exercise 4: Stability exercises. Your physiotherapist will show you how to do specific exercises to improve the stability of your shoulder blade.

As you progress you will be given resistance exercises to do to improve the strength of your shoulder and maximise your range and ease of movement.

Your therapist may alter the exercises according to individual requirements.

If you have any questions, please ask your physiotherapist.