BaylorScott&White
ORTHOPEDIC ASSOCIATES OF DALLAS
A member of HealthTexas Provider Network

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Frozen Shoulder (Adhesive Capsulitis)

HOME EXERCISE PROGRAM

Frozen shoulder is thickening and tightening of the shoulder joint lining. It usually goes through painful, stiff and thawing stages over many months. Gentle, frequent stretching helps keep and regain motion; forceful stretching tends to make it worse.

How to do this program

- Pain rule: mild discomfort up to 3 out of 10 during exercise is okay if it settles by the next morning. Stop any exercise that causes sharp pain.
- Move slowly and with control. Breathe normally; do not hold your breath.
- Stretch to a mild pull, not sharp pain, and hold each stretch. Short sessions 2-3 times a day work better than one long one.
- While the shoulder is very painful, do fewer reps and shorter holds.
- Add Phase 2 strengthening once pain settles and motion begins to return.

Phase 1 · Gentle stretching (daily)

Use heat before stretching if it helps.



1. Pendulum

Lean on a table with your good arm. Let the sore arm hang loose and gently swing it in small circles by rocking your body, not by using your shoulder muscles.

1 minute each direction · 2-3 times a day

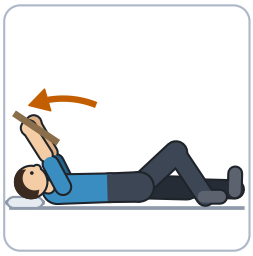


2. Table Slide

Sit beside a table with your hand on a towel. Slide the hand forward as you lean your body forward, until you feel a gentle stretch. Slide back.

Make it harder: *Hold the stretch 20 seconds at the end.*

10 reps · 2 times a day

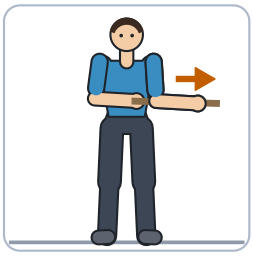


3. Lying Cane Raise

Lie on your back holding a cane with both hands. Use the good arm to help lift both arms overhead until you feel a stretch. Lower slowly.

Make it harder: *Hold 20 seconds at the top.*

10 reps · 2 times a day

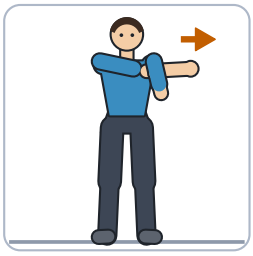


4. Cane External Rotation

Elbows at your sides bent 90°. Use a cane in the good hand to push the sore hand outward until you feel a stretch.

Make it harder: *Hold 20 seconds at the end.*

10 reps · 2 times a day



5. Cross-Body Stretch

Bring the arm across your chest. Use the other hand to gently pull it closer at the elbow until you feel a stretch in the back of the shoulder.

Hold 30 sec · 3 reps · 2 times a day



6. Towel Stretch Behind Back

Hold a towel over your shoulder with the good hand and behind your back with the sore hand. Gently pull up with the top hand.

Hold 20 sec · 10 reps · 2 times a day

This program is a guideline. Your doctor or therapist may adjust it based on your condition and progress.
Call the office for fever, wound drainage, calf pain or swelling, or new numbness or tingling.

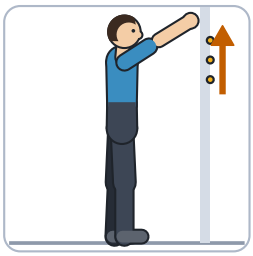
Questions: 469.800.7200
Rev. 10/2026

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Phase 2 · Progress stretching and strengthen (thawing stage)

Hold stretches longer (30-60 sec) and add these exercises.

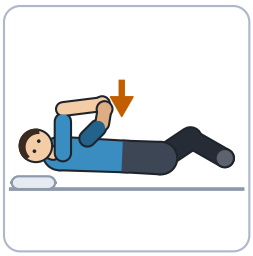


7. Wall Walk

Face a wall and walk your fingers up as high as is comfortable. Hold, then walk them back down.

Make it harder: *Stand a little closer each week.*

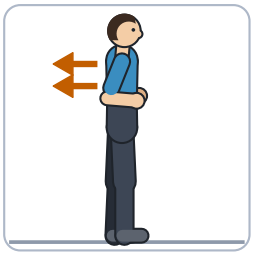
10 reps · 2 times a day



8. Sleeper Stretch

Lie on the sore side with the arm in front at shoulder height and the elbow bent 90°. Use the other hand to gently press the forearm toward the bed.

Hold 30 sec · 3 reps · 1-2 times a day

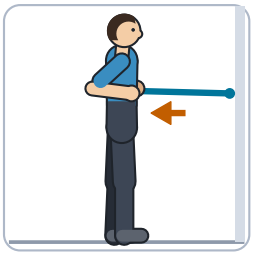


9. Shoulder Blade Squeeze

Stand tall with arms at your sides. Squeeze your shoulder blades down and back without shrugging. Hold 5 seconds.

Make it harder: *Do it with your arms out in a W shape.*

10 reps · 2 times a day



10. Band Row

Hold the band in front of you with arms straight. Pull your elbows back and squeeze the shoulder blades together, then return slowly.

Make it harder: *Use a stronger band or step farther back.*

3 sets of 12-15 · once a day

Everyday tips

- Use the arm for light daily tasks within comfort; avoid jerking or sudden reaching.
- Sleep on your back or the other side with a pillow under the sore arm.
- Recovery often takes 12-18 months; steady daily work helps most.

Call the office if

- Pain is severe and not controlled with your medicines.
- Motion is getting worse despite the exercises after 6-8 weeks.
- You have diabetes and your blood sugar is hard to control during treatment.