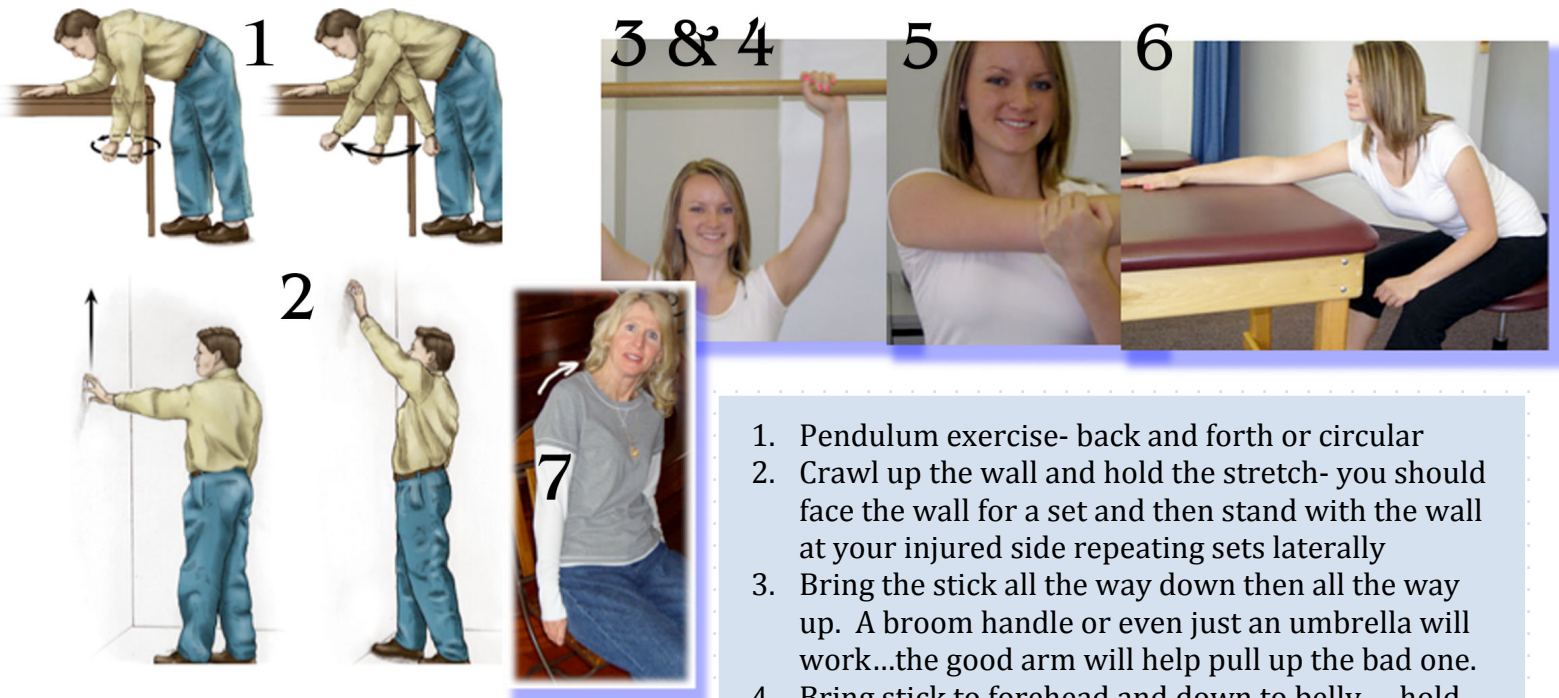


# Shoulder Exercises for a Frozen Shoulder

The urge to rest an injured joint is a natural one. For the shoulder this can prove disastrous, as the shoulder can be guarded too well and fall into disuse since we have another arm we can use! Six weeks after an injury your scar tissue tightens more and more. If you follow the natural inclination to rest your shoulder so that it doesn't hurt so much, the joint will scar up tighter and tighter. Then the injury will not just hurt when you use it for vital activities like golfing but it will even begin to interfere with your sleep. Even laying on the shoulder hurts.

The best solution is to do physical therapy so the joint gets stretched more vigorously than we would be inclined to do for ourselves (=pain). If we gave you these exercises we are asking you to try home therapy for now. The exercises work if there is no bad rotator cuff tear that needs to be fixed. We might not know that without an MRI. If we are not sure, we must have an orthopedic surgeon see it. Although surgeons are not anxious to operate on shoulders, some people opt for that because of how slow the progress is with physical therapy. But remember that even after a surgery there will be a lengthy and painful process of physical therapy to keep the joint mobile and avoid excess scar tissue formation.

You should see gradual improvement over 2-3 months if you are doing exercises every day!! Not many of us will find time for exercises two or three times a day, but make the best attempt you can. If you have disturbed sleep due to severe pain, I highly encourage doing these exercises in the middle of the night when you are awakened instead of drugging yourself with pain medication. That works better than medication. 18-24 months is the total healing time, so after a year most of your range of motion should be back (a little pain still). Do repetitions 10-20 times and hold stretches for 20-30 seconds. After doing this set, repeat a 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> time.



1. Pendulum exercise- back and forth or circular
2. Crawl up the wall and hold the stretch- you should face the wall for a set and then stand with the wall at your injured side repeating sets laterally
3. Bring the stick all the way down then all the way up. A broom handle or even just an umbrella will work...the good arm will help pull up the bad one.
4. Bring stick to forehead and down to belly ... hold this stretch... it can hurt!
5. Grab the tight shoulder and hold this stretch
6. By moving your body away from a table, your arm gets a good stretch- either head on or to the side!
7. Holding the bottom of a chair while your body leans away gives the shoulder a good stretch
8. Put the stick in your bad hand and behind your back and pull up with good hand ... ouch!

Over time you will see improvement and will customize stretches that work for you. The next step is strengthening and needs to be included after sleep is possible again and some function is returning. 'tsg 2017

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