



St George's University Hospitals 
NHS Foundation Trust

Physiotherapy Department

Cuff Class Participant Booklet

Contact Details:

St George's Hospital
Blackshaw Road
Tooting
London
SW17 0QT

Phone: 0208 672 1255

www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

 @STGMSKPhysio

Name:.....

excellent
kind
responsible
respectful

Introduction to the class

You have been referred to this class because you have with Rotator Cuff Related Shoulder Pain (RCRSP).

RCRSP is a term used when describing pain that is related to the muscles of your shoulder called your rotator cuff. These muscles control your shoulder during movements of lifting the arm away from body, such as reaching upwards or when placing the hand behind your back.

This pain may have come on gradually or suddenly, if the shoulder has been overused in any way beyond its normal use e.g. repeatedly lifting boxes whilst moving house.

This is a very common condition and research has shown that with the right type of exercise based rehabilitation and a greater understanding of how to manage this problem, that people can successfully return to normal daily function. It may take at least 6 weeks before you start to see improvements in your pain.

Session 8: Long Term Planning

Now you have all the information you need to manage your shoulder pain.

2

How much physical activity should you do?

Adults (19 to 64) should aim for at least **150 minutes** of moderate intensity activity, in bouts of 10 minutes or more, each week

All adults should undertake muscle strengthening activity, such as

- exercising with weights
- yoga
- or carrying heavy shopping

at least 2 days a week

Minimise the amount of time spent sedentary (sitting) for extended periods

This can also be achieved by 75 minutes of vigorous activity across the week or a mixture of moderate and vigorous.

Please ask your physiotherapist or class instructor about exercise opportunities in the local community, or look up the website links below:

Park Run	Wandsworth Wellbeing Hub	Active Lifestyles	Walk 4 Life
Parkrun.org.uk/	www.wandsworthccg.nhs.uk/hub	www.Enablelc.org/	www.Walk4life.info/

Session 7: Managing Flare-ups



Tendons do not like 'overload', this can make them painful. A flare-up of pain might be because load was increased too much or too quickly.

Remember - pain does not equal harm. Usually the muscles around the shoulder need to be strengthened to cope with your day to day activities.

If you get a flare up - don't panic! Take some rest, don't stop altogether, keep moving and modify your activities if needed for a short period of time. Then you can restart your normal activities as soon as possible.

Class Weekly Education Topic Schedule

All class sessions consist of exercise and education discussing the below topics:

- **Session 1:** Why am I here? Explanation of class format, aims and goal setting. Benefits of exercise.
- **Session 2:** What is RCRSP?
- **Session 3:** What causes pain?
- **Session 4:** Pacing and review of goals.
- **Session 5:** The role of investigations.
- **Session 6:** Management options for RCRSP.
- **Session 7:** Managing flare-ups.
- **Session 8:** Long term exercise planning and goal setting.

Programme Aims

The goal of this programme is to improve the function of your shoulder whilst also learning about the condition and how best to manage it. Most people find that by the end of the sessions they feel a reduction in their symptoms, however it can take up to 6 months to see a bigger change.

The programme aims to help you manage your symptoms more effectively, enable you to be more active, to understand more about the problem. We will also give you strategies to help in the long-term.

The class aims to highlight the importance of your understanding and appreciation for the benefits of exercise. But how do you feel about exercise at the moment? Do you think it will help or not? What are your previous experiences?

There is often a 'cycle of change' related to how we feel about exercise. Read through the categories on the next page and see which part of the cycle represents your views at present. Then, over the next few weeks see if your position changes.

By the end of the programme we hope to have improved your feelings of self control over your shoulder pain.

Session 6: Management Options for RCRSP

Surgery

In 2017, a large research study compared patients who had surgery versus those who did not. There was no significant difference in outcome.

There are rare cases that time and Physiotherapy may not help, therefore your GP can refer you to a consultant if you wish. There are risks with surgery such as infection, nerve damage, thrombosis and having a general anesthetic.

Injections

For some people experiencing very high levels of pain, a local steroid injection can help them. It is a temporary tool to reduce pain and allow them to exercise. This can break the vicious cycle of pain. There are risks associated with injections which should be discussed with your clinician.

Pain relief

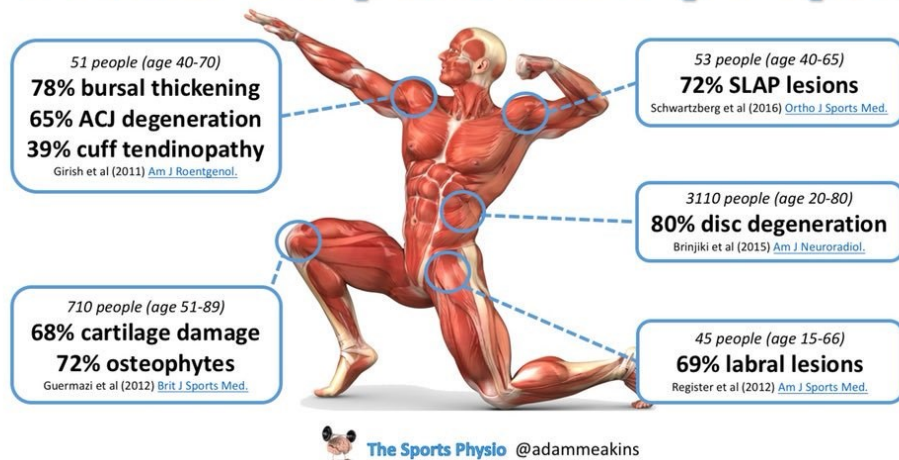
Taking adequate pain relief initially can allow you to be compliant with some gentle exercises, breaking the cycle of pain. If you are unsure what you can / should be taking please discuss this with your Pharmacist / Doctor.

Physiotherapy

Research shows Physiotherapy to be as effective as surgery and in some studies more effective.

Session 5: The Role of Investigations in Non-traumatic Shoulder Pain

Scans on pain free people



Imaging findings such as tears or ‘bursal thickening’ are just as common in people without pain as they are in people with pain.

This means that the findings on an image are often not the cause of your pain, and the images cannot reliably tell us what the problem is. As we get older, it’s normal to see structural changes in the shoulder.

Getting better is not related to ‘fixing’ what is found on the scan.

Cycle of Change



THINKING

You recognise the need to be more active.
 You have yet to make any changes in your lifestyle.
 You are seriously considering a more active lifestyle.

PREPARING

You have thought about how you may change your lifestyle.
 You have taken small steps towards changing your lifestyle.
 You are open to advice and discussion about what to do.

TAKING ACTION

You have made significant changes to your lifestyle.
 You are adapting to your new healthier, active life.
 You require some advice on how to progress your activity .

MAINTAINING

You are exercising on a regular basis.
 You have overcome the initial difficulties of greater activity.
 You feel confident that you can continue in the long-term.

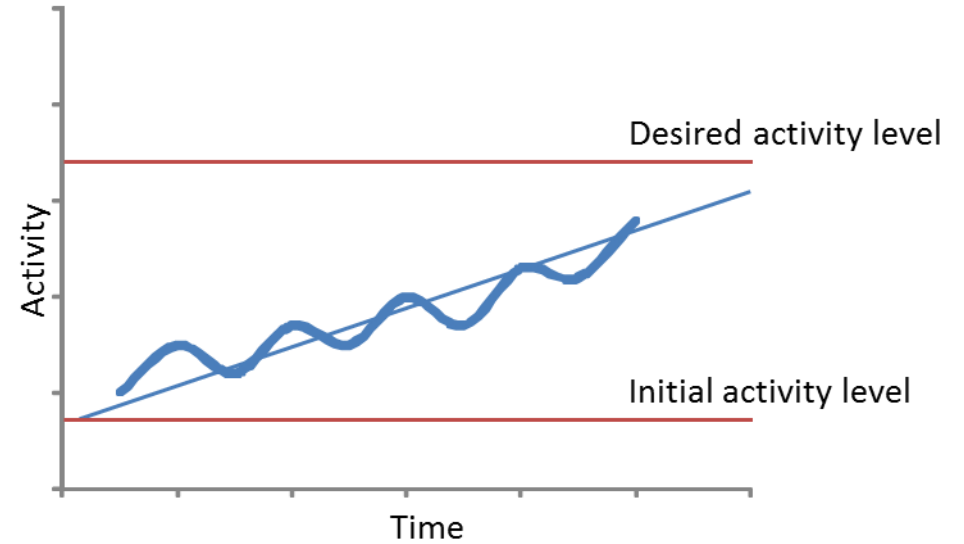
RELAPSING

You have stopped exercising.
 You have had difficulties continuing with an active lifestyle.
 You could not overcome the barriers to exercising.

Exercise Record Sheet

Exercise	Session 1		Session 2		Session 3		Session 4		Session 5		Session 6		Session 7		Session 8	
	Reps	Notes	Reps	Notes	Reps	Notes	Reps	Notes	Reps	Notes	Reps	Notes	Reps	Notes	Reps	Notes
1. Step and Reach																
2. Sliders																
3. Point and Reach																
4. Lunge and Punch																
5. Push-ups																
6. Thoracic extension and rotation																

Session 4: Pacing



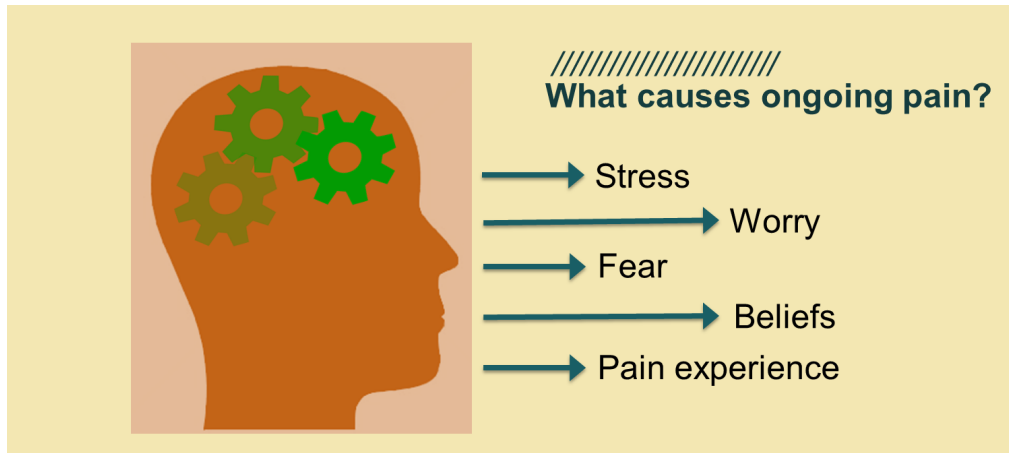
It is important to strengthen your shoulder in a controlled way.

The aim is to reduce pain and symptoms associated with RCRSP to help the muscle, tendon and related structures to tolerate imposed loads. The shoulder should be gradually reloaded.

If you do experience extra pain, it does not mean that you have caused any damage to your shoulder, it is simply that the muscles are adjusting to the new demands placed on them. Remember 'hurt doesn't mean harm'.

Session 3: What Causes Pain?

When you have had shoulder pain for a while, there are changes that occur secondary to the original problem. Avoiding activities or movements leads to loss of flexibility, strength and stamina. Doing less exacerbates these symptoms, so it's important to exercise in a controlled way.



Other factors can also influence our pain. Worry, stress, fear and our previous pain experiences can all increase our perception of pain. Managing these other factors with socialising, relaxation and exercise can help control pain. Research shows that people who engage in these aspects of pain management do better than those who do not.

Session 1: Goal Setting

It is much easier to keep motivated to exercise and be more active if you set clearly defined goals.

Long term goals however can be daunting and off-putting, so consider the smaller steps you need to take to achieve your long term goals.

An example of step by step goals may be brushing teeth then washing hair and finally, putting plate on top shelf.

What goals will you set yourself today?

In the next 6 weeks I will be able to:

.....

.....

In the next 3 months I will be able to:

.....

.....

In the next year I will be able to:

.....

.....

Action Planning

To achieve your goals you need to set an action plan. The boxes below will guide you through this.

My Action Plan for this week is e.g. Brush my hair:

When will I do it? e.g. time of day:

Where will I do it? e.g. home, work, gym:

How much / how long?

Session 2: What is Rotator Cuff Related Shoulder Pain?

RCRSP is very common and causes pain in the shoulder and upper arm. It can spread further down the arm and up towards the neck and shoulder blade. It can feel worse when the arm is moved away from the body such as reaching up or when placing the hand behind the back.

