



IMPORTANCE OF HAND EXERCISES AFTER MASTECTOMY

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ABSTRACT

Cancer is a leading cause of death in the world-wide accounting for 7.6 million deaths. Deaths from cancer in the world- wide are projected to continue rising with an estimated 13.1 million deaths in 2030. Breast cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed among women across the world.

Mastectomy is the surgical removal of one or both breast partially or completely. Although it is a very safe procedure but sometimes it causes wound infection, bleeding, hematoma, lymphedema, numbness in the upper arm and pain. So, exercises may help alleviate phantom breast pain and other complications occurring after the breast surgery. Exercises are even more important to keep arm and shoulder flexible after breast surgery (Mastectomy) So, it's important to develop a regular habit of doing exercises to maintain arm and shoulder mobility after surgery to prevent the complications. There are few exercises which should not be done until drains and sutures (stitches) are removed, but excluding them others can be performed soon after surgery. The exercises that increase your shoulder and arm motion can usually be started in a few days post procedure.

KEYWORDS:- Breast cancer, Mastectomy, Hand Exercise.

INTRODUCTION:

Physical activity and rest are both important after mastectomy. After the surgery, body try to recovers from a serious procedure which requires time, patience and the right exercise program in order to heal and feel better.

Performing specific exercises after a mastectomy can help to keep the range of motion in shoulders and arm, it also helps to remove stiffness and pain and reduces swelling.

Exercise is an important part of treatment and recovery after surgery for breast cancer. It help the cancerous patients to:

- Begins the daily activities of arm and shoulder.
- It helps in improving the muscle strength of the arm as well as shoulder.
- It reduces the stiffness of the joints.
- It reduces pain of the neck and back.
- It improve the overall well-being.

General guidelines to develop a successful exercise routine

- Wear comfortable, loose clothing.
- Exercise after a warm shower when the muscles get relaxed and warm.
- Breathe deeply and often as do each exercise.
- Do the exercises until feeling a gentle stretch, not pain.
- Do not bounce or make any quick or jerky moves while stretching.
- Contact the respective consultant if feeling any unusual swelling or pain.
- Don't exercise more in the early weeks following the surgery.

Generally, Exercises and daily activities should not be painful. If it creates pain, discomfort and swelling than before do consult with the consultant.

EXERCISES AFTER SURGERY IN FIRST 1 TO 7 DAYS

In the First 1 to 7 days gentle exercises should be done after surgery or while the drain is still in the place. During that time, it is normal to feel skin and tissue pull and stretch a bit with these exercises. On that time be careful not to make sudden movements until the incision had healed and the drain has been removed. Repeat these exercises 3 to 4 times in a day.

➤ Deep breathing exercise

Deep breathing exercise is perform to help improve aerobic (heart-lung) capacity. It is also important for women who have had breast cancer. Deep breathing is an important part of client's recovery and also it helps to expands the chest wall. It helps with relaxation and can fill the lungs completely.

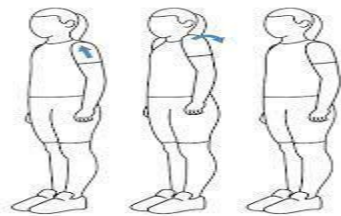
- Try lying on your back or sitting and then take a slow, deep breathing through the nose. Breathe in as much as you can while trying to expand your chest and stomach like a balloon.
- Do not tight your shoulders or neck.
- Relax and breathing out slowly slowly and completely.
- Repeat 4-5 times.



➤ **Shoulder shrugs and circles:**

This exercise can be done in sitting as well as in standing position.

- Lift both shoulders up towards your ear. Keep your chin tucked in slightly. Hold for 5-10 seconds, and then slowly drop them down and relax. Repeat 5-10 times.
- Gently rotate both the shoulders forward and up, and then slowly back and down, and making a circle. Keep your chin tucked in slightly. And repeat the same in the opposite direction.
- Repeat 5-10 times in each direction.



➤ **Arm lifts**

This exercise can be done in sitting as well as standing position.

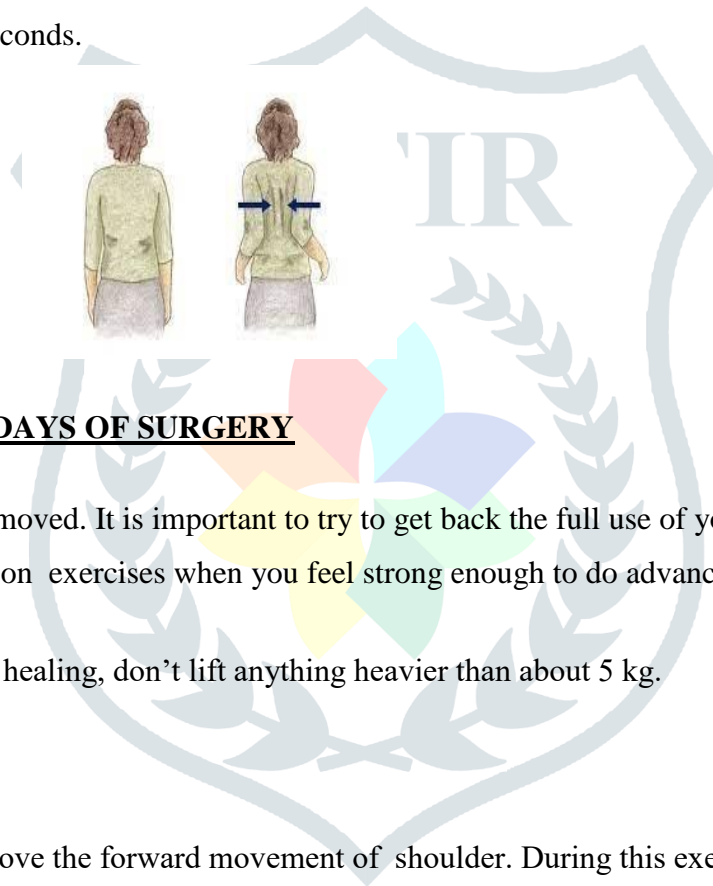
- Claps your hand together in front of your chest. Point your elbows out.
- Slowly lift up your arms up until you feel a gentle stretch.
- Hold for 1 to 2 seconds, and then slowly return to start position.
- Repeat 5 to 10 times.



➤ **Shoulder blade squeeze**

This exercise helps improve movements in your shoulder and upper limbs.

- Sit in a chair face straightly ahead without resting back on the chair, or stand up. Your arms should be at your side with elbows straight and your palm facing your sides.
- Broad your chest then gently squeeze your shoulder blades together keep them down and rotate your thumbs so your palms face forward.
- Hold for 5 to 10 seconds and practice your deep breathing while holding the posture.
After that again relax and return to your start position.
- Repeat 5 to 10 seconds.



EXERCISES AFTER 7 DAYS OF SURGERY

Once the drain has been removed. It is important to try to get back the full use of your shoulder. Begin with easy exercises and then go on exercises when you feel strong enough to do advance exercises.

Note:- During this stage of healing, don't lift anything heavier than about 5 kg.

➤ **Wand exercise**

This exercise helps to improve the forward movement of shoulder. During this exercise, client need a “wand” to perform this exercise. For this, the client use broom handle, stick or a cane. during the exercise, the client may feel a gentle pull but not any pain or pinching during these exercises.

- Firstly lie on your back by keeping your knees bent. Hold your wand with both hand (your palm should be facing down) and your hands should be shoulder-width apart.
- Lift the wand over your head as much as you can until you starts feeling of a stretch.
Your unaffected arm will help in lifting the wand.
- Hold for 1 to 2 seconds. Lower arms.
- Repeat 5 to 10 seconds.



➤ **Winging it**

This exercise helps to improve movement in front of your chest and shoulder. It may also take a few weeks of regular exercise before your elbows get close to the floor. If you feel pain or pinching in shoulder, place a small pillow behind head, above (not under) the affected shoulder.

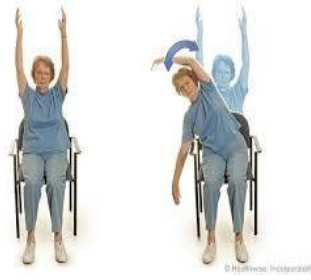
- Lie on the back with your knees bent and then touch your fingertips to your ears with your elbows pointed to the ceiling.
- Move your both elbows apart and down to the bed (or floor). Hold the same for 1 to 2 seconds.
- Repeat 5 to 10 times.



➤ **Side bends**

This side bends exercise helps to improve movement on the both sides of body.

- First, Sit on a chair and clasp your hands together in your lap.
- Then slowly lift your arms over your head and bend your elbow slightly.
- When the arms are above your head, bend at your wrist and move your body to the right. Hold it for the 1 to 2 seconds. Use your right hand and gently pull your left arm on your right. Keep yourself gently planted on the chair. Take a normal deep breath in and out.
- Again return to the centre and then bend to the left, using your left hand to pull your right arm further.
- Repeat it 5 to 10 times on each side.

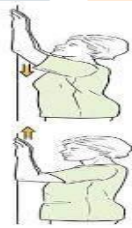


➤ Wall climbing

This exercise helps to increase movement in your shoulder. Try to touch a little higher on the wall everyday. This exercise can be performed in two directions- (i) facing the wall and (ii) your affected side to the wall.

Facing the wall

- Firstly, Stand facing the wall, about 5 cm about (2inches) away. Place both of your hands on the wall at shoulder level.
- Use your finger to climb up or slide as much as you can go until you feel a gentle stretch.
- Return to the start position.
- Repeat it for 5 to 10 times.



Side wall stretch

- Stand with your affected side to the wall, about 2 feet from the wall so that you can easily touch the wall with your fingertips.
- Keep walk your fingers up the wall as you perform in facing the wall. Try not to rotate your body towards the wall. Keep your torso facing forward when you can't go up as high.
- Lower and repeat it 5 to 10 times.



Points to keep in mind after breast surgery

It is important to talk to your consultant or any another member of the health care team before starting the exercise. Start exercising slowly and do more as you are able to do so without any stress. Immediately stop exercising and talk to the consultant immediately if you are feeling like:

- Get weaker and start losing your balance or start falling.
- Have unbearable pain that gets worse.
- Start feeling of any new heaviness, aching, tightness, or other strange sensations in your arm.
- Have unusual swelling which gets worse as time goes on.
- Feeling of headaches, dizziness, blurred vision, new numbness, or tingling in your arms or chest.

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