

# A Simple Exercise (and Tips) for Healthy Shoulders



## Before You Start

- ✓ Do this movement once a day, or as often as feels good.
- ✓ You can do this sitting or lying on your back if standing is difficult.
- ✓ If you've had a recent injury or surgery, check with your therapist first.
- ✓ Always move within a pain-free range and don't push it past the point of comfort.

## Shoulder Reach Exercise

10 to 15 reps, 2 sets:

- 1 Start with your arms bent at your sides.
- 2 Turn your palms to face up, as if you're carrying a tray.
- 3 Turn your palms to face up, as if you're carrying a tray.
- 4 If it feels good and pain-free, reach all the way overhead.
- 5 Lower your arms slowly.

## Need Help?

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### ⚠️ When to get help

See a physiotherapist if your shoulders:

- Feel stuck or painful during this exercise
- Wake you up regularly at night due to pain
- Limit your ability to do daily things



### Pointers

- Keep your shoulders relaxed (no shrugging).
- Let your shoulder blades glide naturally.
- Breathe comfortably — no need to hold your breath.
- Move smoothly and steadily, not fast or jerky.
- If you're unable to actively raise one arm, use your other arm to help it lift upwards.



### Progressions

Start without weight and slowly build up your range, repetitions, and resistance as your comfort improves.

- **Stage 1:** Elevate to a comfortable range, 10–15 reps × 2 sets, no weight
- **Stage 2:** Work toward full elevation, 20–30 continuous reps × 2 sets
- **Stage 3:** Add light resistance (1–2 lb weight or resistance band), 8–10 reps × 2 sets

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## How Sleeping Affects Your Shoulders



Waking up with a sore shoulder? That might be caused by pressure on the joint while sleeping.

Here's how to support your shoulder for better rest:

### Side Sleeper

- Place a **small, soft pillow** between your waist and underarm to reduce pressure.
- Use a second pillow to support your upper arm, especially if that's the sore side.
- Keep your spine straight, not bent like a hammock.



### Back Sleeper

- Use a **flat pillow under your shoulders and head**, not doubled-up.
- Add a pillow under your elbow or both arms for extra support.
- Place a small pillow under your knees or low back if that feels better.

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