



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Arm Exercise Program

This information describes an arm exercise program that will help you with your recovery.

Doing arm exercises with gentle movements will help prevent stiffness. It will also help you move better and get back your strength and endurance.

The arm exercises below will help you work on a range of muscle groups. If you have weakness in 1 arm, you can change the exercises as described in the instructions. Your occupational or physical therapist may change the exercises to meet your needs.

Exercise Tips

- Dress comfortably. Your clothes should not limit your movements. Wear a hospital gown, pajamas, or athletic clothing.
- Move slowly through all the movements.
- Do not hold your breath while doing any of these exercises. Breathe deeply. Count out loud during the exercises to keep your breaths evenly paced and remind you to breathe.
- Do the exercises lying in bed or sitting up straight in a chair. You can also try to do them while standing or sitting at the edge of your bed. If you do them this way, make sure another adult is around. This will help to make sure you are safe and reduce your risk of falling.
- Stop any exercise that causes you pain or discomfort and tell your occupational or physical therapist. Continue to do the other exercises.
- If you have any questions, talk with your physical therapist or occupational therapist.

Exercises

Shoulder shrugs (elevation/depression)

1. Shrug your shoulders up toward your ears (see Figure 1).
2. Drop them down (see Figure 2).

Repeat _____ times.

Do _____ repetitions _____ times per day



Figure 1

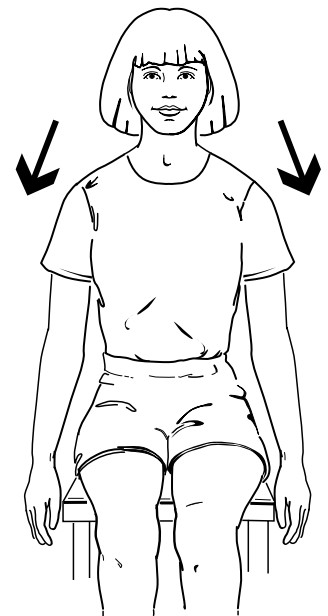


Figure 2

Shoulder retraction and protraction

Shoulder retraction (draw back)

1. Squeeze your shoulder blades together (see Figure 3).
2. Hold for _____ seconds.
3. Relax.

Repeat _____ times.

Do _____ repetitions _____ times per day

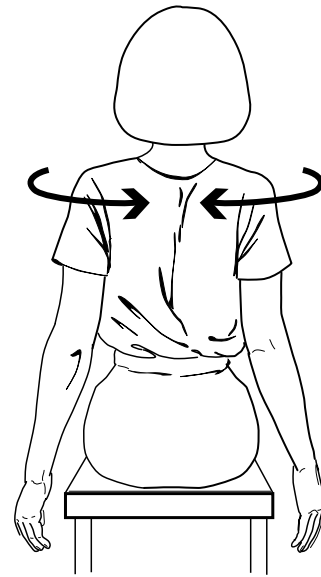


Figure 3

Shoulder protraction (draw forward)

1. Draw your shoulders forward (see Figure 4).
2. Hold for _____ seconds.
3. Relax.

Repeat _____ times.

Do _____ repetitions _____ times per day

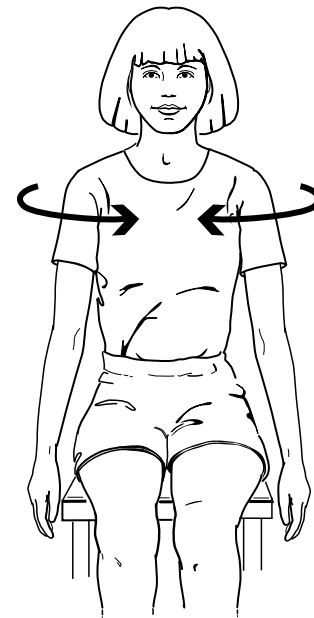
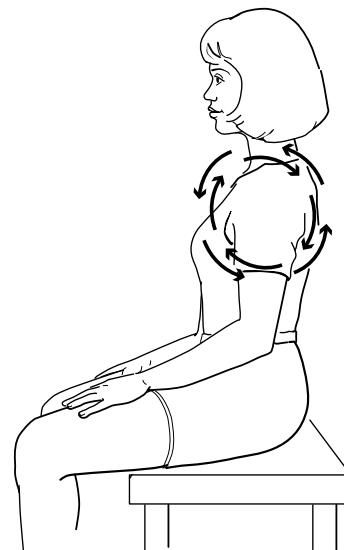


Figure 4

Shoulder circles

1. Roll your shoulders forward in a circle _____ times (see Figure 5).
2. Roll your shoulders backwards in a circle _____ times (see Figure 5).
3. Relax.

Do _____ repetitions _____ times per day



Arm rotations (modified horizontal abduction/adduction)

1. With your arms at shoulder height, clasp your hands together.
2. Without rotating from your waist, move your arms to the left (see Figure 6).
3. Return your arms to the center (see Figure 6).
4. Without rotating from your waist, move your arms to the right (see Figure 6).
5. Return your arms to the center (see Figure 6).

Repeat _____ times.

Do _____ repetitions _____ times per day

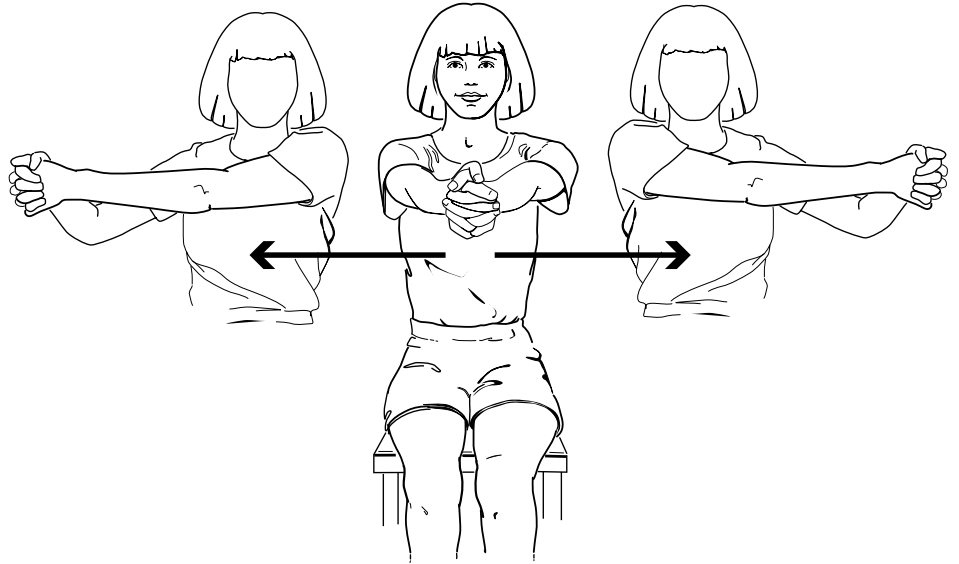


Figure 6

Shoulder flexion/extension

For both of these exercises, if one arm is weaker than the other, clasp your hands together and raise both of them over your head.

Shoulder flexion

1. Start with your arms at your side.
2. With your palms facing each other, raise your arms in front of you as far as you can (see Figure 7).
3. Return to the starting position.

Repeat _____ times.

Do _____ repetitions _____ times per day

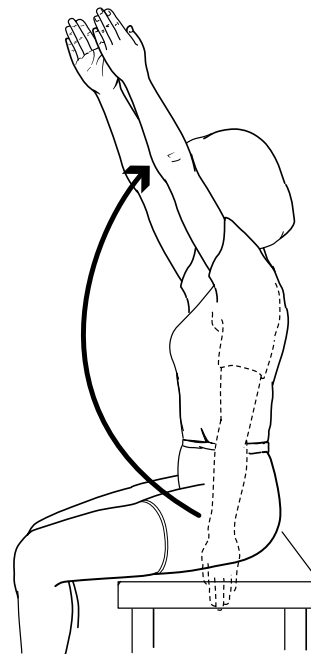


Figure 7

Shoulder extension

1. Start with your arms at your side.
2. With your palms facing each other, raise your arms behind you as far as you can (see Figure 8).
3. Return to the starting position.

Repeat _____ times.

Do _____ repetitions _____ times per day

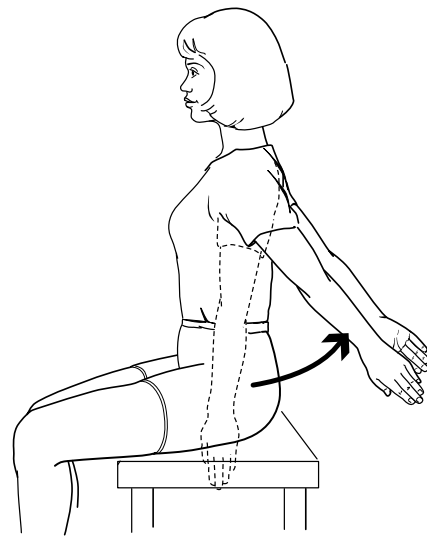


Figure 8

Shoulder abduction/adduction (lateral shoulder arm raises)

1. Extended your arms out to the side (see Figure 9).
2. Slowly raise your arms above your head.
3. Return to the starting position.

Repeat _____ times.

Do _____ repetitions _____ times per day

If one arm is weaker than the other, have someone help you with your weaker arm.

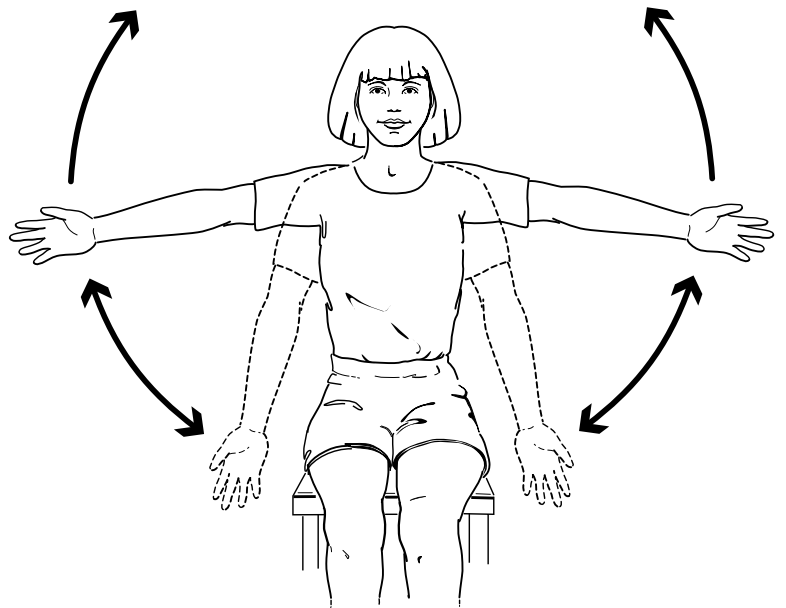


Figure 9

Shoulder internal rotation

1. Place your hands behind your back. Use 1 hand to grasp your other wrist (see Figure 10).
2. Slowly slide your hands up the center of your back as far as you can.
3. Hold for _____ seconds.
4. Return to the starting position.

Repeat _____ times.

Do _____ repetitions _____ times per day

If one arm is weaker than the other, use your stronger arm to help your weaker arm slide up your back.

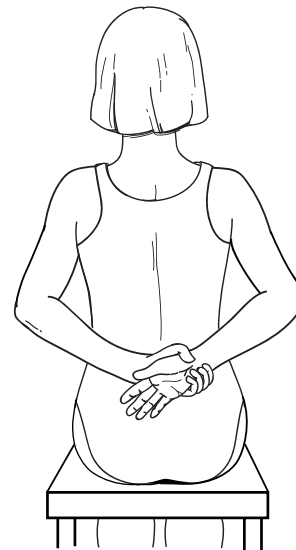


Figure 10

Shoulder external rotation

1. Start by slowly raising your hands over your head (see Figure 11a) until you reach the back of your neck (see Figure 11b).
2. Spread your elbows as far apart as possible (see Figure 11c)
3. Hold for _____ seconds.
4. Return to the starting position.

Repeat _____ times.

Do _____ repetitions
_____ times per day

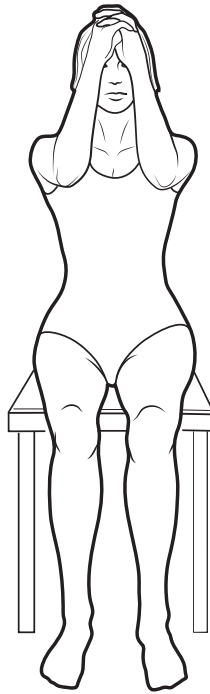


Figure 11a

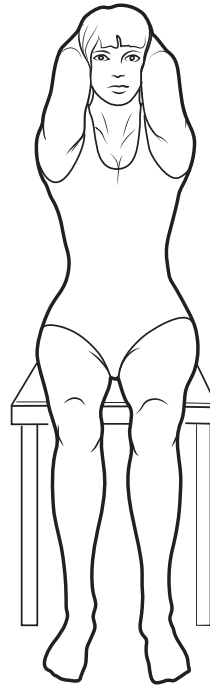


Figure 11b

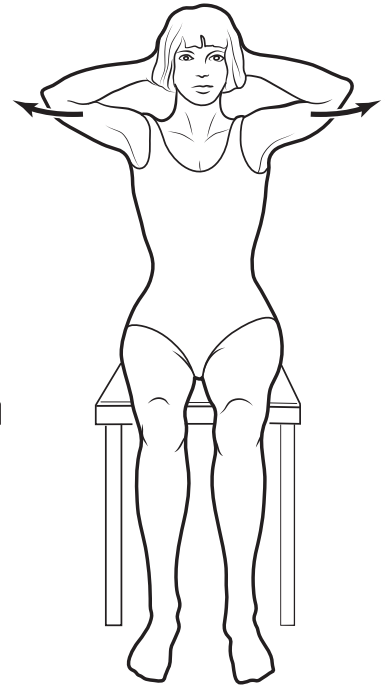


Figure 11c

Elbow extension and flexion

1. Start with your arms at your sides, with your palms facing forward (see Figure 12).
2. Bend at your elbow so that your palm touches your shoulder (see Figure 13).
3. Return to the starting position.
4. Repeat _____ times.
5. Repeat the exercise with your other arm.

Do _____ repetitions _____ times per day

If one arm is weaker than the other, clasp the wrist of your weaker hand and bend your elbows.

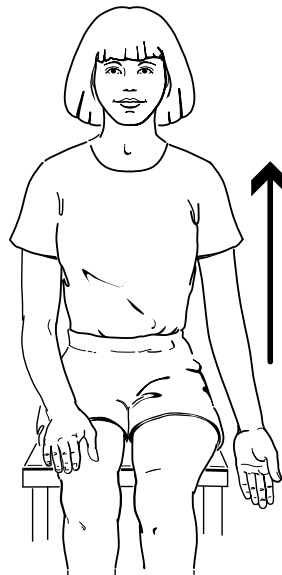


Figure 12

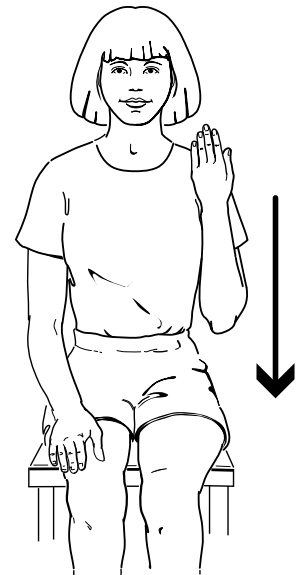


Figure 13

Forearm supination and pronation

1. Rest your forearms on your lap with your palms facing down.
2. Turn your palms up toward the ceiling (see Figure 14).
3. Return to the starting position with your palms facing down (see Figure 15).

Repeat _____ times.

Do _____ repetitions _____ times per day

If one arm is weaker than the other, clasp the wrist of your weaker arm. Rotate your forearm turning your palms up and down.

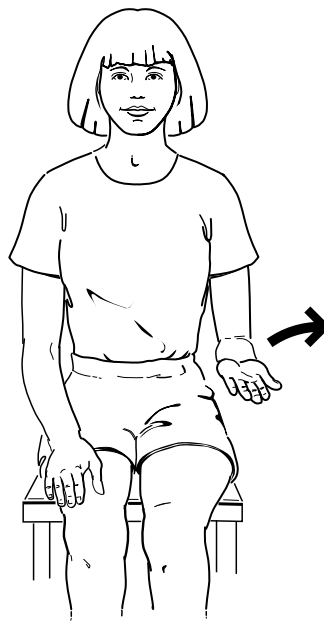


Figure 14

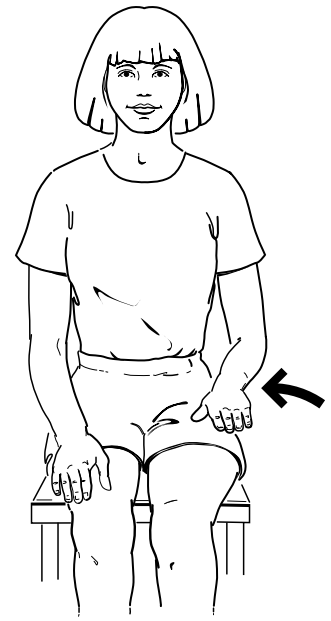


Figure 15

Wrist extension and flexion

1. Place your arms on a supported surface such as a table or desk, leaving your wrists free to move.
2. Turn your palms up toward the ceiling and bend your wrists up and down (see Figure 16).

Repeat _____ times.

Do _____ repetitions _____ times per day

If one arm is weaker than the other, use your stronger hand to clasp the weaker wrist. Bend it up and down.

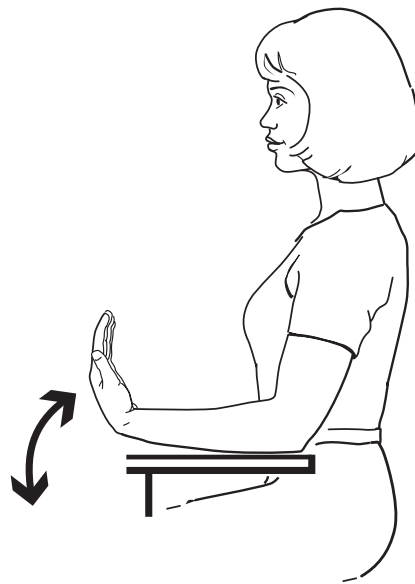


Figure 16

Lateral wrist deviation (sideways wrist movements)

1. Place your forearms on a surface such as a table or your lap.
2. Without moving your elbow or forearm, move your wrists side to side (see Figure 17).

Repeat _____ times.

Do _____ repetitions _____ times per day

If one arm is weaker than the other, use your stronger hand to help the weaker hand. Bend your wrist side to side.

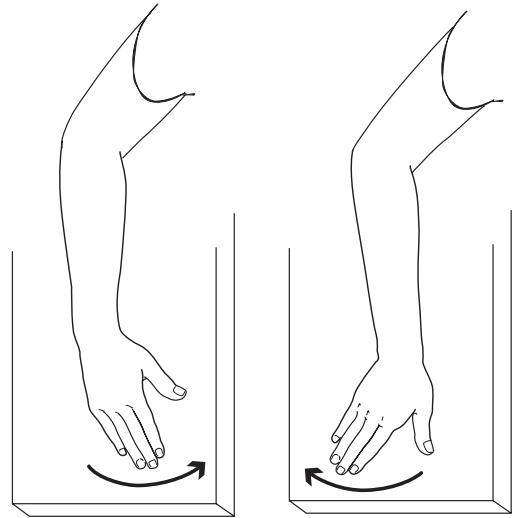


Figure 17

Finger flexing and extending

1. Place your forearms on a surface such as a table or your lap.
2. Make a tight fist, and then open your hand and extend your fingers out until they are straight (see Figure 18).

Repeat _____ times.

Do _____ repetitions _____ times per day

If one arm is weaker than the other, use your stronger hand to bend and straighten the fingers of the weaker hand.

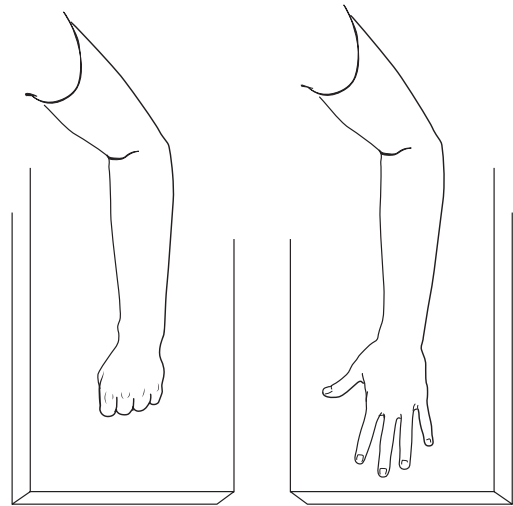


Figure 18

Finger stretch

1. Place your forearms on a surface such as a table or your lap.
2. Slowly spread your fingers apart, then bring them back together (see Figure 19).

Repeat _____ times.

Do _____ repetitions _____ times per day

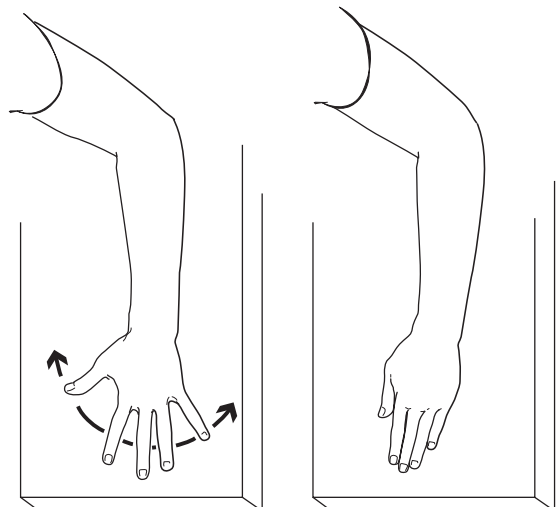


Figure 19

Finger opposition

Touch each fingertip to your thumb (see Figures 20a-d).

Repeat _____ times.

Do _____ repetitions _____ times per day

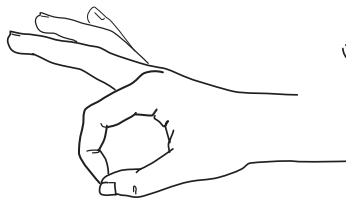


Figure 20a

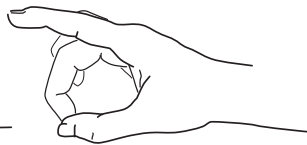


Figure 20b

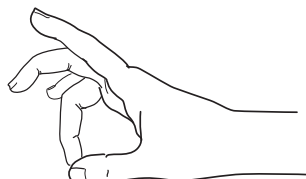


Figure 20c

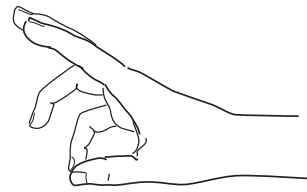


Figure 20d

Pendulum exercise

1. Lean over a table and support yourself with your uninvolved arm. Let your involved arm hang down freely.
2. Swing your involved arm in clockwise and counterclockwise circles and forward and back (see Figure 21). Let gravity assist your arm with the motion.

Repeat _____ times.

Do _____ repetitions _____ times per day

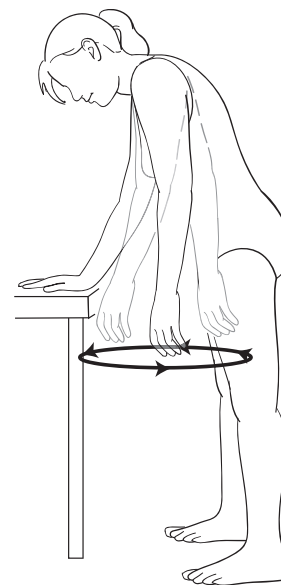


Figure 21

Cane exercise

1. Lie on your back with your arms at your side, holding a cane or stick.
2. Lift the cane up toward the ceiling and over your head, keeping both arms level with each other (see Figure 22).
3. Return your arms to the starting position.

Repeat _____ times.

Do _____ repetitions _____ times per day

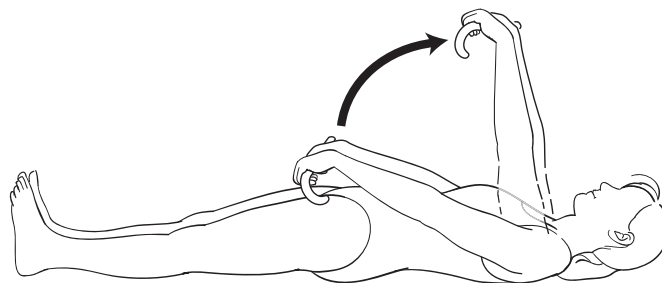


Figure 22

Contact Information

You can reach your occupational or physical therapist at _____.