

'PUSH' Program



**Promoting
Use of
Shoulder and Hand**

PUSH is an exercise program designed to help you to start activating the muscles in your arm again.

After stroke arm weakness is very common. The more exercise you can do the better chance you have of using your arm again in daily tasks.

We recommend you spend at least an hour each day doing the program.

Any questions you have about the program can be directed to your physiotherapist or occupational therapist.

This program was developed at Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital, Stroke Unit, August 2011.

Exercise 1 – whole arm stretch



- Place your palm down on the chair/bed beside you
- Ensure your fingers are pointing as far backwards as possible (see picture)
- Keep your elbow as straight as possible
- Hold this position for up to 5 minutes
- Repeat 3 times

Exercise 2 – the shoulder PUSH



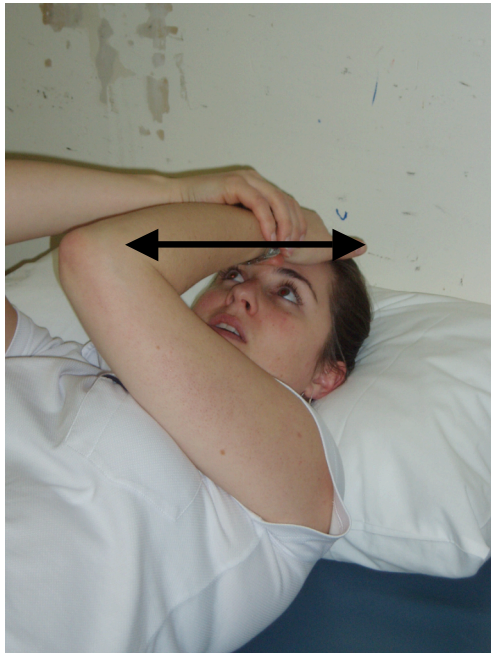
- Place your arm out straight on a table in front
- Push your whole arm forwards – away from your body (the table may slide forward too with the movement)
- Try to keep your body still and only push your arm forwards
- This is a small movement caused by the muscles at the front of your chest and shoulder
- Repeat > 100 times (you can complete 5 sets of 20 repetitions)

Exercise 3 – hold onto your head



- Place your palm flat onto your forehead
- Tighten your arm muscles to prepare to hold your arm in place
- When you are ready – let go of the arm
- Try to hold your arm in the same position for 10 seconds
- If your arm will not stay still try to slow down the lowering of the arm to back beside your body
- Repeat 20 times

Exercise 4 – the in and out



- Place your palm on your forehead as in exercise 3
- You can continue to support the arm if needed by holding your hand in place
- Try to move your elbow slightly to the left and then the right
- The movement may be very small, one direction may be easier than the other
- Repeat 50 times

Exercise 5 - the arm PUSH



- Place your forearm on the table in front (keep your elbow bent)
- Place a towel or piece of paper under your arm if there is too much friction on the table (if your arm cannot slide)
- Push your hand forward to reach a target
- This movement means your elbow straightens and shoulder moves forward
- Even a centimetre or two means your muscles are working
- Repeat 50 times

Exercise 6 – the bend and straighten



- Lift your arm and place your hand on your forehead (as in exercise 3 and 4)
- Hold your arm in place by your elbow if necessary
- Lift your hand up off your forehead (so your arm is straight if possible)
- Try to lower your palm back down to your forehead, as slowly as possible
- Repeat 3 X 20 reps

Exercise 7 – visualise hand movements



- Look at your hand
- Visualise each of your finger moving
- Imagine they each move to touch your thumb
- If they do not move – it's ok! The more you can imagine it happening the better
- Ensure you continue to look at your arm
- Repeat 10 movements for each finger