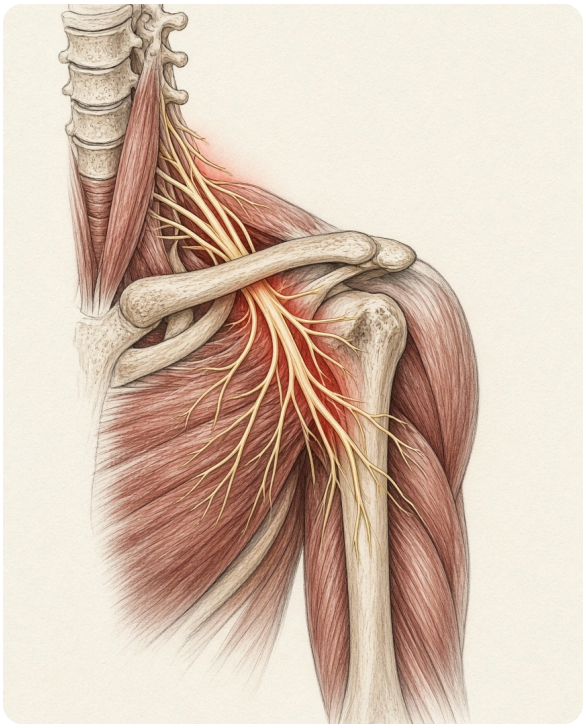
ARMIN PHYSIO



PATIENT GUIDE

Brachial Plexus Injury

Pain, numbness or weakness in your arm? It could be a **brachial plexus injury.**

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What is the brachial plexus?

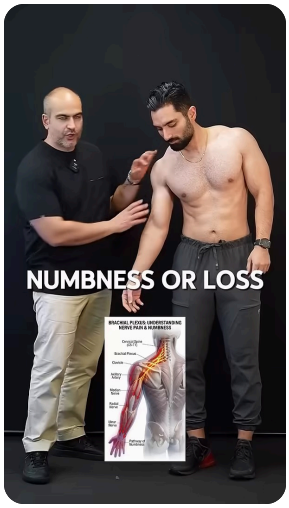
The brachial plexus is a network of nerves that travels from your neck through your shoulder and into your arm. An injury to these nerves can affect movement, strength and sensation. Injuries range from mild nerve irritation (a “stinger”) to severe nerve damage, so exercise should be matched to how severe yours is.

QUICK CHECK

Does this sound like you?

- ☐ **Numbness or loss of feeling** down the arm
- ☐ **Burning or shooting pain** into the arm
- ☐ **Weakness**, even sudden paralysis, after a contact sport
- ☐ Extreme weakness, or you **can’t hold up your arm**
- ☐ Reduced sensation or **grip strength**

New weakness or loss of feeling, especially after an injury, needs prompt medical assessment. Once you’ve been assessed and cleared, try the 3 exercises on the next pages.



Numbness or loss of feeling down the arm



Can’t hold up your arm

YOUR 3 EXERCISES

Try these exercises

1 Dowel-assisted range of motion

Keeps the affected arm moving (passive range of motion)







1. Start by working the **passive range of motion** of the affected arm.
2. **Hold on to a dowel** like so with your unaffected hand.
3. **Push up the affected side**, working the range of motion and making sure you're maintaining that. Come back down.
4. **Go in front as well**, and repeat.

2–3 sets of 10, slow and gentle

Suggested dosing, once you're cleared

Stop if you get new or worsening weakness, numbness, or burning or shooting pain into the arm.

2 Neck isometric into a pillow

Maintains your neck strength without moving it



1. Work on **maintaining your neck strength**.
2. **Place a pillow behind the head** and lean into the pillow.
3. From here, **press your neck gently into the pillow** as much as you can.
4. **Hold it three seconds** and repeat.

2–3 sets of 10, 3-second holds

Hold from Armin's video; sets and reps suggested

Stop if you get new or worsening weakness, numbness, or burning or shooting pain into the arm.

3 Arm isometric into a pillow

Keeps the shoulder muscles working





1. Work your muscles **isometrically**. Try to keep those muscles alive.
2. **Place a pillow** like so and have your **hand leaning against the pillow**.
3. From here, **push into the pillow** as much as you can tolerate.
4. **Hold it for three seconds**, release and repeat.

2–3 sets of 10, 3-second holds

Hold from Armin's video; sets and reps suggested

Stop if you get new or worsening weakness, numbness, or burning or shooting pain into the arm.

DAILY ROUTINE · ABOUT 10 MINUTES

Put it together

01
Mobilize
Dowel-assisted range of motion

02
Neck
Neck isometric into a pillow, 3 s holds

03
Arm
Arm isometric into a pillow, 3 s holds

The 3-second holds are from Armin's video. His description gives no set counts, so the sets, reps and doing it once a day are suggestions. Start only once you've been medically assessed and cleared.

Stop the exercise if you notice

- New or worsening weakness in the arm or hand
- Increasing numbness, or burning or shooting pain
- Pain that lingers or is worse the next day

Brachial plexus injuries range from mild to severe. Your exercise plan should be individualized to your injury.

SAFETY FIRST

Get checked right away if you have

- New weakness or loss of feeling, **especially after a fall, crash or contact-sport hit**
- A **sudden, severe or unusual headache** (“the worst headache of your life”)
- **Dizziness, double vision, trouble speaking or swallowing**, drooping of the face, or fainting
- **Numbness, tingling or weakness** in your arms or hands that is **getting worse**, or in **both arms**
- **Clumsy hands, trouble walking or poor balance**, or new **bladder or bowel** changes
- A **stiff neck with a fever**, constant pain at night, or **unexplained weight loss**

Call 911 for a sudden severe headache, trouble speaking, face drooping or weakness on one side. For the others, see a doctor right away or go to the nearest emergency department. If your neck isn’t improving after a few weeks, **book an assessment**.

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NEED MORE HELP?

Book an assessment with Armin

In clinic or virtually. See current options and times at the link.

Scan to book

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Disclaimer: This handout is for education only. It is not a diagnosis or medical advice and does not replace an assessment by a qualified health professional. If you're unsure whether these exercises are right for you, check with your physiotherapist or doctor first.

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