

# Advice only versus advice and a physiotherapy programme for acute traumatic anterior shoulder dislocation: the ARTISAN RCT

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## Plain language summary

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## Plain language summary

The shoulder dislocates (comes out of its socket joint) when the upper end of the arm bone is forced out during an injury. This common problem occurs mostly in men in their 20s and women aged over 80. After the bone is put back in its socket, most people are managed with physiotherapy. In the United Kingdom, once the bone is back in its socket, there is a range of physiotherapy provision: some hospitals offer advice, and some offer advice and a course of additional physiotherapy sessions.

We compared advice alone to advice and physiotherapy for people who had a shoulder that had come out of its joint for the first time. Physiotherapy advice and additional sessions included education about the injury and exercises to move and strengthen the shoulder. When we started this project, this was the first time these two treatments had been compared. Our aim was to compare what activities the two groups could do 6 months after injury via a questionnaire. We also compared quality of life and the cost of rehabilitation at 6 weeks, 3 months, 6 months and 12 months after injury.

Adults with a shoulder out of its joint and who were not having surgery were asked to take part. All adults who were eligible and consented to take part were assigned, by chance, to either a single session of advice or the same session followed by physiotherapy.

Between 14 November 2018 and 14 March 2022 we collected data on 482 people, from 41 NHS sites across the UK. We found at 6 months there was little evidence that additional physiotherapy was better, when compared to advice alone. Cost-effectiveness analysis (comparing changes in costs and quality of life) suggests additional physiotherapy might provide value for money. However, the changes involved are small and uncertain.

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## This manuscript

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