

For all stretches:

- ✔ Stretch until you feel tension, **not** pain.
- ✔ Hold each stretch for:
10 20 30 seconds
- ✔ Do these stretches 2 times daily.
- ✔ Repeat each stretch 3-5 times.
- ✔ **Slowly** return your arm to the starting position after each stretch.
- ✔ You may feel a “popping” in your arm. As long as you do not feel a lasting pain, this is okay.

What can I do if I have cording?

- Don't worry! Most people affected with it will usually regain their normal shoulder and arm function within 3 months.
- It is very important to **stretch** your arm **everyday** until your normal function returns.

By doing these stretches every day, you should notice:

- A decrease in your pain.
- An increase in your arm mobility.

Stretching DO's and DON'T's

- ✘ **Don't** stretch into pain. A good stretch should be slightly uncomfortable but **never** painful.
- ✔ **Do** move in and out of the stretch slowly and gently.
- ✔ **Do** hold the stretch for the prescribed time.
- ✔ **Do** call your doctor or physiotherapist if you are having trouble getting back your normal arm function.

If you have any questions or concerns, call your physical therapist at:

Cross Cancer Institute (Edmonton)

Phone: 780-432-8716

Holy Cross Centre (Calgary)

Phone: 403-698-8169

Central Alberta Cancer Centre (Red Deer)

Please call: 403-406-1963



Axillary Web Syndrome



Symptom Management—Rehabilitation Oncology



What is Axillary Web Syndrome?

Axillary Web Syndrome, sometimes called cording, banding, or tethering, is a condition that may happen in the arm after surgery and treatment for breast cancer.

- You may see strong bands or cords in the armpit, which may run down the arm. Sometimes these cords can go all the way down to the base of the thumb.
- There can often be some pain down the arm making it difficult to reach, lift your arm or straighten your elbow.



Cording

Cancer Research UK

What causes cording?

The cause of cording is not really understood yet.

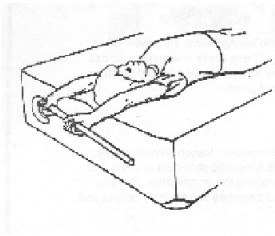
It may be caused by lymph or blood vessels damaged by breast surgery, cancer treatment (radiation), or even by the cancer itself.

Cane Stretch

- Lay on your back on a bed or on the floor with both of your knees bent.
- Hold a cane with hands shoulder width apart resting on your lap.
- Keep your elbows straight and slowly lift your arms above your head as far as possible

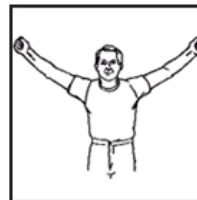
Do this with your:

- a. Hands shoulder width apart
- b. Hands wider than shoulder width apart, making a “vee”



Clock Stretch

- Lay on your back on a bed or on the floor with both of your knees bent.
- Start with your arms at your sides.
- Keep your elbows straight, and raise your arms, with the palms of your hands facing upwards.
- Raise them until you feel some tension.



Wall Stretch

- Face the wall.
- Put one foot at the wall, and the other foot behind you.
- Put your hand on the wall.
- Slide your hand upward until you feel some tension.
- Keep your elbow straight.



“Bye Byes”

- Keep your elbow straight, wave “Bye Bye”.

Do this 2 times in each position:

- a. Arm forward
- b. Arm sideways

