Acute Care for Shoulder Injuries

1. **Rest:** Avoid painful activities or prolonged use of the injured arm. A sling may be issued to help support the shoulder and reduce stress on the muscles and injured tissues.

2. **Ice:** Apply a cold pack, placed in a pillowcase, to the painful area for 15-20 minutes, 4-6 times per day. Or, for more direct cold therapy, massage the painful area with an ice cube for 5-10 minutes (until numb and red).

3. **Range of motion:** Begin pain free pendulum exercises as indicated by the therapist/trainer. Lean forward, supporting yourself on your uninvolved arm. Allow the injured arm to dangle freely, influencing its movement by swaying your body. Begin with a small pain free motion, side to side and forward and back, then progressing into circles. Increase the movement as the pain subsides.
   NOTE: If this is painful, try leaning forward with your injured elbow bent and supported at the forearm by your other arm. Then sway as tolerated.

4. **Sleeping position:** At night, try to sleep in a position that will reduce the stress on the sore shoulder.
   - **Back sleeping:** Sleep on your back with 1 or 2 pillows under your knees, your arms resting at your sides. Place a pillow under the painful arm if needed.
   - **Side sleeping:** Do not sleep on the injured side. Instead, sleep on the non-involved side and hug a pillow so the injured arm is resting on top of the pillow.