

Shoulder pain is a common complaint which can be attributed to different conditions. Most of these conditions may not require surgery and will experience results with physical therapy intervention.



Common Causes

Rotator cuff tendonitis occurs when active muscle tissues become inflamed. This is mostly experienced during repetitive activities, causing pain and discomfort. Age, gender and anatomy may play a role in the development of tendonitis. Inflammation can progress and cause increased pain and loss of range of motion (ROM). This is known as Impingement Syndrome. If left untreated it can progress through four stages of ROM loss in the shoulder joint; this leads to adhesive capsulitis or frozen shoulder.

Degenerative arthritis occurs later in life. It takes place when the smooth cartilage in the shoulder joint wears away. The bone-on-bone friction causes irritation and severe pain. Degenerative arthritis typically causes loss of motion and strength during activity.

Traumatic injuries to the shoulder can include: dislocation, rotator cuff tear, labral tear, and fracture. These types of injuries are typically caused by a specific incident.

SHOULDER PAIN GUIDE

Treatment

Shoulder pain can be treated in a variety of ways.

Rest – Minor irritations in your shoulder from overuse should improve with rest. Rest will allow tissue irritation to decrease.

Ice – Ice is a preferred modality to help decrease acute inflammation in the shoulder after overuse. The change in temperature to the shoulder tissue assists in blocking the pain signal to the brain.

Lifestyle adjustments – Adjusting and limiting certain repetitive motions in job duties and household activities will help prevent pain from developing.

Pain that does not seem to be improving with rest, ice, and behavior modification should be assessed by a medical professional.



What to expect from a shoulder evaluation at Physical Therapy of Idaho

- **Range of motion measurements:** this is to determine how much movement you have in the shoulder.
- **Palpation:** touching various structures around the shoulder to feel for abnormalities or painful-to-touch structures.
- **Strength measurement:** testing the strength of muscles around the shoulder.
- **Special tests:** these tests are specific maneuvers performed on the shoulder to help determine what specific structure is causing pain or problems.

The best option for eliminating your shoulder pain is to come see a physical therapist at Physical Therapy of Idaho. Your shoulder pain will be assessed and a treatment plan will be created to address the dysfunction causing your shoulder pain. Call today to set up an appointment at any one of our three locations!

Most insurance carriers do not require a doctor's referral for you to commence treatment at Physical Therapy of Idaho. We can usually get you in for your evaluation within 24 hours of calling for an appointment, so relief may be only a phone call away. Our physical therapists have between 10 and 20 years of experience in treating pain and injuries, so let us help you get you back to your best, pain free.