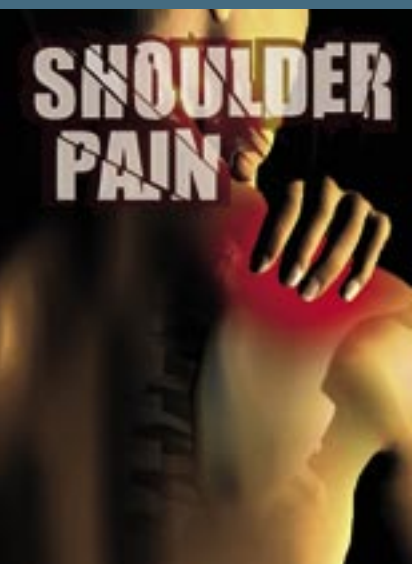


PERSONAL
MESSAGE

the Challenge of Treating Shoulder Pain

by Geert Audiens, PT, OCS,
COMT, cert. MDT

In This Issue



2

SHOULDER PAIN

Risk factors and what to do.

3

TIPS & TRICKS

Exercises to minimize problems with shoulder pain.

4

FAQ

Most frequently asked questions about shoulder pain.

SHOULDER PAIN— SIMPLE TEST

What is the state of your shoulder?

5

FEATURED PHYSICAL THERAPIST

If you have shoulder pain, our featured therapist can help you.

SUCCESSSES

6

CONTACT Us

Shoulder problems are one of the most complex disorders physical therapists face daily. They require in-depth investigation of the symptoms and how these symptoms affect patients' daily functional capacity. Prior to formulating the treatment most appropriate for the patient, the physical therapist needs to gather lots of data to determine what type of shoulder injury the patients has, the structures involved, and the limitations the injury causes. For this reason, I find shoulder problems both challenging at the initial evaluation phase and rewarding as I see my patients making progress. I love treating shoulder problems!

Following are some of the steps I use to help me sort out a shoulder problem systematically. First, I need to know what symptoms the patient is experiencing. Is it a sharp pain, a dull ache, pain with movement or pain at rest? This valuable information helps me differentiate the type of injury the patient has.

Then, I need to know where the patient is feeling the pain or discomfort. Is it in the front, at the side or top of the shoulder? Maybe the pain is primarily in the upper arm or perhaps in the shoulder blade area. And to rule out any neck problems, I need to know if the pain radiates into the arm and goes below the elbow. This information helps me focus on the specific structures involved.

The next piece of the puzzle is when the symptoms occur and what exactly aggravates the symptoms. Is it better or worse with activity or motion? How does the patient feel at night? Is there one specific position or motion that brings on the worst symptoms? What are the activities the patient is no longer

able to do? This gives me an idea of the functional impairment the problem has on my patient.

To further isolate the cause of the problem, I perform some very specific tests to see if they can reproduce the patient's symptoms. This tells me exactly what is producing the patient's dysfunction, and where to focus my treatment. Addressing the cause of the problem ensures that the symptoms will not recur at a later stage.

The last step is deciding how to treat the problem. This is the fun and rewarding part. With all the information I have gathered, I can now decide on the right combination of hands-on manual therapy, movement re-education, modalities and exercises that will get the patient out of pain and return to full function. Unfortunately, most shoulder problems have no 'quick fix'. They take the skill of the therapist to diagnose, but also the effort and persistence of the patient to fully resolve the problem.

Of course, the real satisfaction comes at the end of the treatments when I hear the great success stories of how physical therapy intervention has allowed my patients to return to the activities they love, without pain or limitations! Definitely a win-win situation!



Geert Audiens —co-owner, Avante Physical Therapy

SHOULDER PAIN

RISK FACTORS THAT CAUSE SHOULDER PAIN AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT THEM

By Gaynor Hale, Physical Therapist



Many people with shoulder problems suffer needlessly because of a delay in treatment. Early symptoms of a shoulder problem that people often ignore are pain in the front or back of the shoulder, difficulty reaching into a back pocket, aching at night or a sharp twinge when raising the arm.

The shoulder is a complex joint and used all day as we go about our busy lives. Because of this it is often injured or overused. By the time an individual feels pain or experiences any loss of function the problem has progressed.

Shoulder conditions present themselves in various forms of inflammation (Def: “unnaturally hot and swollen”) and are caused by irritations of one sort or another. Some common types are:

1. Tendonitis (inflammation of the tendon)
2. Bursitis (inflammation of the “bursa” or a fluid-filled sack protecting the joint)
3. Arthritis (inflammation of the joint itself)

The causes are primarily overuse, strain or injury. Painting a ceiling, playing too many tennis matches or lifting overhead too much can lead to this type of inflammation of the rotator cuff (the main muscles of the shoulder that control the motions of that joint).

Impingement (“pinching or putting pressure on”) develops when chronic or long term inflammation persists. This causes the tendon and other tissues to thicken narrowing the space under the tip of the shoulder. The more inflamed the tissue becomes and the narrower the space, the more pinching occurs causing significant pain especially when reaching the arm across the body. Left untreated

an impingement can progress to a “Frozen Shoulder” where an individual loses some or all shoulder motion.

Chronic wear and tear or an injury can lead to breakdown of the tissue. A rotator cuff tear occurs when the tendons of the rotator cuff muscles separate from the bone. Surgery is often needed to fix this condition. Traumatic injuries can lead to shoulder instability, shoulder dislocation or shoulder separation.



Finally, there are traumatic injuries and fractures that often require immediate surgery. Falling on an outstretched arm, getting slammed into during a football game or being involved in a motor vehicle accident are common causes of traumatic shoulder injuries.

As you can see there are a lot of different causes of shoulder pain and the treatment depends on the cause of the problem. For this reason it is important to seek medical advice before beginning any treatment. Physical Therapy is almost always recommended in the management of shoulder problems. In fact many Orthopedic

“Rest and medication alone are not nearly as effective as Physical Therapy intervention where the skilled provider identifies the faulty moving components, weak or tight muscles and restores normal function.”

Surgeons now recommend that Primary Care Practitioners, “Try PT First™.” The reason for this is that studies show that rest and medication alone are not nearly as effective as Physical Therapy intervention where the skilled provider identifies the faulty moving components, weak or tight muscles and restores normal function. In addition, it often takes weeks to get an appointment with a specialist, and in our managed care world, without at least a trial of conservative treatment like Physical Therapy, the specialist can’t even get expensive tests like MRIs authorized. All these delays mean more pain and suffering for the patient. The longer you wait to start treating the harder it is to fully recover in a minimum of time.

The first thing a Physical Therapist does, after reviewing the referral from the Physician, is his own special evaluation. A Physical Therapist’s skill and training gives him the ability to identify what is going to get the patient back to normal in terms of motion and function. During the evaluation, all directions of motion are measured; the muscles are tested individually and as a whole. The Physical Therapist will ask a patient a lot of questions about his pain and function, look at the patient’s posture and how he moves.

The first thing Physical Therapy will address is the pain. This may be done using ice/heat, ultrasound, and electrical stimulation. Then it’s time to begin manual intervention. A Physical Therapist is trained in just how to massage and stretch the tissue surrounding the shoulder joint so as to really make a patient feel better. Combined with precise joint mobilizations one will likely regain mobility in no time. Then depending on the problem the patient will learn specific exercise designed to re-educate, rebuild and improve the stability of his shoulder.

Tips and Tricks

EASY EXERCISES FOR HEALTHY SHOULDERS

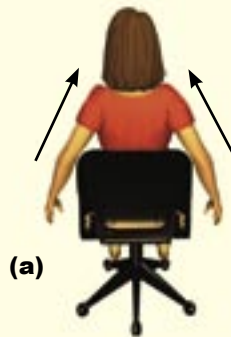
Each of these exercises can be done in sets of ten repetitions two or three times daily or as tolerated, or as directed by your Physical Therapist.



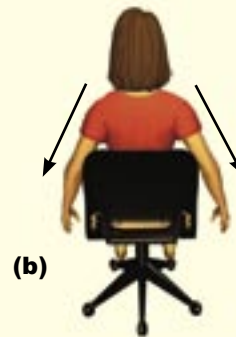
1. (left) Sit up with your spine very straight and tall, chin tucked in. This puts your shoulders and upper back in an ideal position.



2. (right) Now place your hands on each side of the seat of your chair. Keeping your elbows straight, push down lifting your butt.



(a)



(b)

3. (left) Shrug your shoulders up (a) and then, relaxing them, let them all the way down (b).

4. (right) Sitting up nice and straight, squeeze your shoulder blades together.



5. (left) Lying on your right side, with your left elbow at your side and your left hand across your stomach, lift your hand up toward the ceiling without taking your elbow off your side. Repeat on your other side.



6. (left) Standing in a doorway, forearm fully against the door jamb, lean through the doorway stretching the arm back.

7. (right) Facing a wall, walk your fingers up the wall until your arm is fully extended over your head. You will need to step closer to the wall as your arm goes higher.



FAQ

Why does my shoulder click or snap?

A tendon that is swollen can “snap” as it moves over a bone. Also there could have been some trauma to the tendon, a bone spur rubbing on the tendon or some calcium deposit in the tendon itself.

Why is my motion restricted?

Any irritation to the joint area or to the muscles themselves will cause the muscles around that area to “guard” it by tightening and trying to prevent motion. This is a protective mechanism to prevent further irritation or injury.

Why does it hurt to lift overhead?

Repetitive overhead work can lead to deep muscle fatigue and altered positioning of the joint. This leads to more irritation of the joint tissue. It is much harder for your muscles to control the motion in your shoulder joint when the arm is over your head because there is more

strain on it. As you lose joint control the result is more tissue irritation and pain.

Why does my shoulder wake me up at night?

A possible cause of this is a tear in the joint tissue or irritation of a tendon in the shoulder. If you put your shoulder in certain positions it can aggravate the irritated tissue. With overhead positioning especially, there could be pinching of the tendons or tugs on the tendon or capsule.

Why is it difficult to reach in my back pocket?

Joint irritation, pain or muscle guarding could all be a factor.

What are the symptoms of rotator cuff problems?

Pain when you reach overhead or your arm just suddenly dropping when you lift something are the typical symptoms.

Do you need to see a Physical Therapist for your shoulder pain? Take this simple test...

Simply place a check mark in the appropriate box. Once you are done, calculate the number of YESes and look at the results.

YES	NO	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you have pain when you raise your arm above your head?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does it hurt to reach?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you have pain while sleeping at night?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does it hurt to lie on your shoulder?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you have pain over the outside of your shoulder in the area of the upper arm?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are you unable to raise your arm?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are you unable to carry objects or lift something?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you have pain in the front of your shoulder?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your shoulder feel loose and unstable?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your shoulder feel stiff and tight?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are you unable to reach into your back pocket?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are you unable to touch the back of your neck?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are you unable to reach the back of your bra?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you have pain that radiates down your arm?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your arm feel achy and weak?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your shoulder hurt after working out?

Results:

Less than 3 Yes

You're doing fine. Exercising may help keep your shoulder in check.

Between 3 and 6 Yes.

Physical Therapy is an option for you.

Between 6 and 10 Yes.

We would advise you to see a doctor to get a better diagnosis. PT is definitely an option.



Featured Physical Therapist

Hannah Parry, BS



Hannah Parry received her physical therapy degree from King's College of London, England in 1998. Since her graduation, she has worked in various hospitals including Queen Mary's Hospital as a Junior Physical Therapist and as a Senior Physical Therapist with Northwick Park Hospital, Royal Bournemouth, and Bournemouth Nuffield.

She specialized in treatment of orthopedic outpatients including experience in acute orthopedic clinics, aquatic therapy, ergonomic assessment, and sports rehabilitation. She has received her MAT 1 Pilates Certification at the Pilates Certification Center in Richmond, Virginia this year in order to provide 1:1 Pilates training at Avante Physical Therapy.

Hannah is also currently working toward completing Maitland and McKenzie certifications. Hannah's philosophy for treating patients is to empower them through education, exercise, and encouragement

SUCCESSSES

What patients are saying...

It was a great pleasure to be treated in your facility. My physical therapist was excellent. —SH

Kudos to Heather. She is an excellent manual therapist and very knowledgeable. —CM

My therapist was very knowledgeable and professional. It is a joy to come in to see her and receive treatments on a regular basis. The staff is great. Thank you for a pleasant experience!!! -- —MO

My treatment has been wonderful and I truly appreciate my therapist for relieving my pain. The administrative ladies were great to work with. You have a great team. Thanks. —EA

The therapist showed genuine concern for my condition and recovery. —JA

Geert and the office staff took great care of me. I was impressed by the level of attention, and will definitely recommend Avante Physical Therapy to my friends. Thanks. —TG

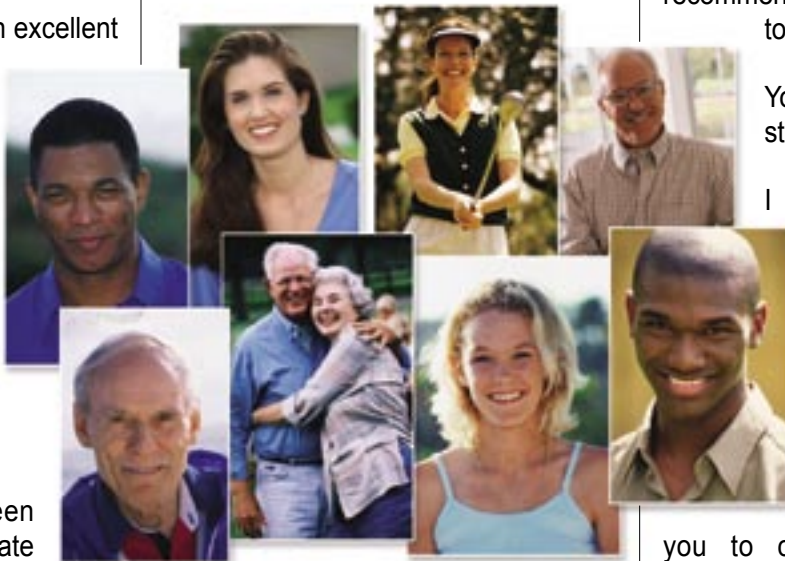
You facility is great and your staff is awesome. —CNS

I felt I learned a great deal about how to maintain the improvement I gained during my therapy sessions.

The therapists are very knowledgeable, skillful, very professional, yet friendly. They motivate

you to continue your treatments to completion. They are very encouraging. —KC

I am impressed with the professionalism of the entire Avante staff. I am glad to say that the results of my treatments are beyond my expectations. —BM



Tired of having **SHOULDER** **PAIN?**



Come and Visit Us for a
FREE CONSULTATION

Find out if Physical Therapy can help
you ease the pain and help you gain a
new outlook on life.

Cary (919) 463-9443

Apex (919) 367-7890

www.avantept.com



AVANTE PT PILATES ADDS NEW CLASS AND PROGRAM DIRECTOR:

Maybe you've heard about PILATES at your gym, from a friend, or read about it in a fitness magazine. Maybe you have wondered just what PILATES is and better yet how it relates to physical therapy.

PILATES is a form of exercise based on the design and teachings of Joseph Pilates, a German-born physical trainer and athlete. PILATES is a systematic form of mat exercises that can also be adapted for performance on specialized equipment found in private studios, clinics, and gyms world-wide. PILATES exercises focus on strengthening core muscles of the hips, stomach, back, and legs which assist in injury prevention, rehabilitation, and postural correction.

AVANTE PILATES was created in response to the growing demand in the Apex/Cary area for quality PILATES instruction and training with a rehabilitative/medical emphasis.

The **AVANTE PILATES** program began offering both 1:1 instruction and weekly group classes last summer in the Avante Physical Therapy Apex clinic. A group class was added in the Cary clinic this month and will continue to meet weekly.

The **AVANTE PILATES** program also recently welcomed new Director, Hannah Parry, PT.

For additional information about class schedules, instructors, and the PILATES method, visit www.avantept.com.



WE CARE ABOUT YOU!

Call us today for a free consultation at

Cary (919) 463-9443

Apex (919) 367-7890

Avante Physical Therapy
916 W. Williams Street
Apex, NC 27502

Avante Physical Therapy
1601 Walnut Street, Ste. 108
Cary, NC 27511



PRSR:STD.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #61
Glendale, CA