



Discover Life Chiropractic

Better Health Naturally

# Chiropractic Care of Shoulder and Arm Pain

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# Chiropractic Care for Arm Or Shoulder Pain

In the United States alone, shoulder pain is estimated to be 26% more common than other types of pains. Shoulder or arm pain is a common occupational hazard. People who lift heavy items and do repetitive shoulder movements such as construction workers and hairdressers, to name a few, are prone to developing shoulder or arm pain over time.

Shoulder pain is a very common problem and it is caused by various reasons. These include poor posture, frozen shoulder, shoulder instability, rotator cuff disorder, osteoarthritis, and joint disorders. On the other hand, shoulder pain can also be due to a problem in another area like the neck.

## Understanding Shoulder Pain

Shoulder pain arises from the shoulder joint but it can also be caused by pain on the surrounding area particularly the neck, diaphragm, and the heart. This is called referred pain. It is a common symptom in hospital care. Since shoulder pain shares overlapping features, it is important to properly assess it and look for red flags that can lead to better diagnosis and treatments.

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# The Anatomy of The Shoulder Joint

The shoulder is made up of different bones that are bound together through the shoulder joint. These bones include glenoid, humerus, acromion, scapula, and clavicle. There are three important articulations in the shoulder and these include the acromioclavicular joint, glenohumeral joint, and the sternoclavicular joint.

Surrounding the joints are ligaments and muscles. The muscle that surrounds the shoulder joint is the rotator cuff musculature which is responsible for the stability and the ability of the shoulder to move in a rotating manner. The rotator

cuff musculature is comprised of four muscles which include the infraspinatus, supraspinatus, subscapularis, and teres minor. These four muscles interlock to create a single unit. These connections within the shoulder pass the subacromial space where the subacromial bursa is located. This portion is where many pain receptors are located.



## Facts and Epidemiology Of Shoulder Pain

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), shoulder pain accounts for 9% of the pain most Americans suffer from. It is a common condition that people suffer from at some points of their lives. If you suffer from shoulder pain, it is crucial that you know its facts and epidemiology to understand what this condition is all about.

- Shoulder pain is considered as the third most common cause of hospital consultation. One percent (1%) of adult sufferers consult their general practitioner yearly to ask treatment for shoulder pain. The rest utilize home remedies to manage their shoulder pain.
- About 85% of patients who suffer from shoulder pain are found to suffer from rotator cuff anomalies. The 15% are due to diseases such as fever, respiratory symptoms, and lymphadenopathy. An even smaller number of people suffer from shoulder pain due to cancer.
- The prevalence of shoulder pain is higher among women pegged at 24.9% than men at 15.4%. It is also more common among elderly people than younger patients.

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## Causes of Arm and Shoulder Pain

There are several risk factors why people suffer from shoulder or arm pain. People who often do repetitive movements of the shoulder and arms at work often suffer from shoulder pain. It is common among athletes, construction workers, hairdressers, factory workers, painters, and office workers. But what are the common causes of arm or shoulder pain? Below are the primary reasons why shoulder pain occurs.

- **Rotator cuff disorders:** Rotator cuff disorders is comprised of several symptoms which include supraspinatus tendonitis,

subacromial pain, rotator cuff tendinopathy and painful arc syndrome. All of these are characterized by having lesions on the rotator cuff as well as tendon diseases that result in the wear and tear of the affected area. The tear in the area may lead to bony spurs that cause extreme pain. This condition is often common among patients aged between 35 and 75 years old—especially those who have a history of lifting heavy weights or doing repetitive shoulder movements.

- **Glenohumeral disorders:** Glenohumeral diseases include adhesive capsulitis and osteoarthritis. Adhesive capsulitis and arthritis are also called frozen shoulder. It causes deep joint pain as well as restrictive activities because the shoulder has impaired external rotation. This particular condition is often common among people who suffer from diabetes.
- **Acromioclavicular disorders:** These types of shoulder pain disorders are caused by injury or osteoarthritis. It is characterized with localized pain and tenderness of the acromioclavicular joint that creates a restriction in the horizontal movement of the arms especially when the elbow is extended. In severe trauma, it often leads to deformity of the arms suggesting a tear in the acromioclavicular ligament. Osteoarthritis, on the other hand, causes impingement of the subacromial space.
- **Referred neck pain:** Referred neck pain is characterized by pain and tenderness on the suprascapular area or the lower neck. This type of shoulder pain arises not because of anomalies on the shoulder joints but on other areas of the body particularly the neck. Referred pain may lead to restriction of the shoulder movements



which can also lead to generalized pain on the upper back and pain area. It is also called upper limb paresthesia.

## Tacoma Chiropractic Care

There are many types of treatments for shoulder pain and chiropractic care is one of them. Chiropractic care is a good alternative for people who are looking for relief from their arm and shoulder pain. If you are

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located in Washington, Tacoma chiropractors are very knowledgeable in managing and treating your shoulder pain so that you won't have to rely so much on drugs and other conventional treatments.

## Chiropractic Diagnosis

There are several tests that Tacoma chiropractors use to detect anomalies of the shoulder. Diagnostic examinations are necessary to isolate areas of the shoulders that are causing pain. Proper chiropractic diagnosis is important so that your chiropractor will be able to design a treatment plan that is suitable for your condition. Below are some of the diagnostic tests Chiropractors do in order to determine the severity of shoulder pain.

- **Physical tests:** Physical tests are often performed by chiropractors in determining the range of motion that shoulders can do. During the initial screening, chiropractors will not only test the stability of the shoulders but also the range of movements (passive, active and resisted) of the two shoulders. Aside from the range of movements,

chiropractors will also inspect the affected area for deformity, swelling, bruising, or muscle wasting.

- **Medical history:** Tacoma chiropractors will also look into your medical history if you have suffered from severe trauma in the past or osteoarthritis. Your medical history can tell if you are someone who is likely to suffer from shoulder pain or not.
- **Imaging tests:** Imaging tests such as X-rays, CT scan, and MRI can also be used by chiropractors to confirm the presence of trauma as well as wear and tear of the shoulder joint.

## Chiropractic Treatments

As soon as Tacoma chiropractors are done examining the root cause of the sciatic pain, they can start implementing chiropractic treatments. Chiropractic treatments are non-invasive but they can bring a lot of relief to the affected area. Below are simple chiropractic treatments that Tacoma chiropractors do to treat an arm or shoulder pain.



- **Shoulder adjustments:** Shoulder joints can misalign which causes the ligaments and muscles to pull in different directions. These cause muscle spasms, pain, and even inflammation. Reliable Tacoma chiropractors can perform gentle shoulder joint adjustment to shift the shoulder and correct its alignment. Alignment of the shoulder often involves the use of a drop table device, a speeder board or a hammer tool to manually adjust the joints without any problems. Aside from the shoulder joint, chiropractors will also

consider adjusting the neck and upper back especially if the root cause of the condition is referred pain.

- **Posture:** Another method that chiropractors do to treat shoulder pain is to correct the posture of their patients. This is a long-term and sustainable solution in treating shoulder pain, as correct body posture can prevent shoulder pain from reoccurring.
- **Exercises:** Simple exercises can be done to treat shoulder pain. However, before you do any shoulder exercises, your chiropractor will teach you the appropriate exercises. Examples of chiropractor-recommended exercises include making circular motions of the shoulder for 30 seconds or pulling on a rubber tubing to improve the resistance and strength of the shoulder muscles.

## Conclusion

Shoulder pain can cause discomfort to a patient but you don't need to dwell on the idea that shoulder pain is a normal part of your physiology. Let Tacoma chiropractors help you manage your arm and shoulder pain so that you can enjoy a pain-free life and do the things that you love to do. Don't hesitate to call Dr. David Hendrickson at Discover Life Chiropractic, 472-4400 for an evaluation to see if chiropractic can help you relieve your shoulder and arm pain!

### Reference:

<http://www.normanmarcuspaininstitute.com/tag/neck-and-shoulder-pain/>

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