



Shoulder Pain



What can cause shoulder pain?

- Injury to a ligament or muscle (sprains and strains)
- Inflammation of a tendon (tendinitis)
- Inflammation of the fluid-filled sacs near the joint (bursitis)
- Irritation of soft tissues by the bones of the shoulder from repetitive overhead motions

Will my pain go away?

- Shoulder pain will typically resolve on its own within a few months
- Treatments can speed up recovery while reducing pain and improving function

What can I do?

- Participate in your care with your healthcare provider
- Continue with your day-to-day activities even if you experience some pain (within reason)

Potential treatment options to discuss with your healthcare provider

- Advice (e.g., posture, lifting, lifestyle)
- Cervicothoracic spine manipulation and mobilization
- Thoracic spine manipulation
- Low-level laser therapy
- Heat/cold
- Joint mobilization
- Daily range of motion exercises
- Strengthening and stretching exercises
- Laser acupuncture
- Pharmacological management
- Shock-wave therapy

Contact your healthcare provider if you experience any of the following

- Unexplained deformity, swelling, or redness of the skin
- Weakness not due to pain
- Fever/chills/feeling ill
- Loss of feeling in shoulder, arm, or hand
- Trouble breathing
- Change or loss of feeling in arms or hands
- Inability to perform movements
- Pain at rest
- Sudden weight loss or loss of appetite

Yu H, Côté P, Wong JJ, Shearer HM, Mior S, Cancelliere C, et al. Non-invasive management of soft tissue disorders of the shoulder: a clinical practice guideline from the Ontario Protocol for Traffic Injury Management (OPTIMa) Collaboration. *Eur J Pain*. 2021. Epub ahead of print.

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