



The Painful Shoulder

It's probably not arthritis - if it is only your shoulder joint and no other joint which is giving you trouble, arthritis is unlikely.

You may be able to do something to stop it hurting

Possible causes;

- Inflammation of the 'soft tissue' and tendons around the joint eg from a fall or knock
- Regular over use of the joint causing inflammation as above; your GP will call this an 'over-use injury' often resulting in tendonitis = inflammation of a tendon which can lead to frozen shoulder if not treated
- No real obvious reason but it has just started; may be stress related
- One of the nerves from the neck area has been trapped causing inflammation in the area which is served by this nerve = stenosis

If you have a full range of passive movement which means that your shoulder is comfortable if someone else is moving it for you this means you are suffering from 'extracapsular' problems.

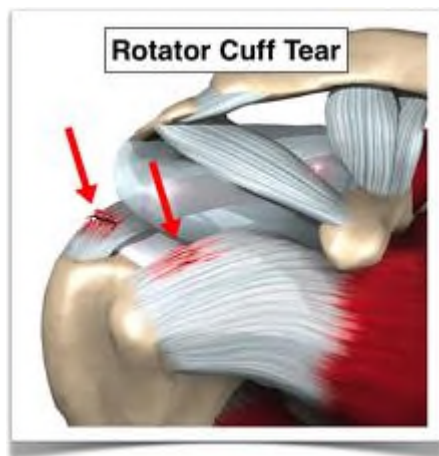
1. Tendonitis; tendons which have become inflamed often due to muscles being used too much =unaccustomed exercise or from a knock. This can lead to a frozen shoulder if not addressed
2. Tendon rupture (partial or complete) often from a sporting injury
3. Subacromial bursitis. The bursa, which is a gel filled sac, within the shoulder has become inflamed.
4. Acromioclavicular joint pain – often steroid injections are offered.
5. Neuralgic amyotrophy – with wasting of the muscles – cause unknown
6. Pain coming from the cervical spine – with numbness and pins and needles; movement of the neck may be restricted and painful.

If your pain free movement is limited at all times then you are suffering from 'intracapsular' problems

1. Arthritis
2. Frozen shoulder = inflammation of the lining or 'capsule' of the shoulder joint (adhesive capsulitis). This can lead to 'the shoulder hand syndrome' when the symptoms extend to the hand which becomes tender with restricted movement.

If you have fallen or strained your shoulder

Then you may have a tear to a tendon which is part of the rotator cuff and application of cold/hot (see relevant handout) will remove the resulting toxins which are the waste products of the blood which has collected there.



Massage of the shoulder by an experienced therapist

There is congestion within the muscles and/or tendons due to over use or injury and the resulting swelling. The fluids around the cells within these 'soft tissues' have become restricted, and the toxins (which result from natural breakdown of substances within the cells) are trapped within these tissues. The irritation these cause (like grains of sand) results in inflammation in addition to the initial damage.

Massage helps the body to;

- keep the soft tissues as free as possible
- allow the tissues to stretch out as they recover and lay down new proteins
- 'flush out' the toxins and remove them to the kidneys and thus out of the body
- return as much flexibility and elasticity as possible
- reduce any adhesions or scarring
- increase mobility in the area
- decrease recovery time.

During your massage treatment the soft tissues will be gently moved and stretched according to the needs of the damaged area. Your therapist will also work on surrounding areas as there are normally stressors beyond the injured area which also need to be assessed and addressed.

Where there is pain your therapist is able to assess how much pressure and movement of these tissues is relevant and to give you advice as to exercises and home massage and self help. Hot and cold compresses for use at home will support your recovery. The more you do at home the more quick will be your recovery.