

Shoulder pain: Adhesive Capsulitis Stiff Shoulder

Management and Prevention

What is it?

Frozen shoulder, also known as Adhesive Capsulitis, is a condition typically characterized by stiffness and pain in your shoulder joint. Signs and symptoms start slowly, get worse over time and get better usually within one to two years.

What are symptoms associated with shoulder impingement?

Common symptoms include pain in the shoulder with movement in all directions, with more pain at night, and pain with laying on your side. The pain is most associated with increasing stiffness of the shoulder.

Management

Management of Adhesive Capsulitis may include the following recommendations:

- Pain control
 - Begin with applying moist heat to the painful region for 15 minutes prior to exercise
- Activity Modification
 - Perform the exercises listed below. The exercises may be painful, but should slowly go back to the normal level after you stop
 - Following the exercises, apply ice to the shoulder for 15-20 minutes (*do not place directly on skin, place towel in between ice and skin*)
 - Decrease activities, positions, or movements that cause an excessive increase in pain and find positions of comfort
 - However, do not avoid moving your shoulder completely, as this can lead to more shoulder stiffness.
 - Relax your shoulders and sit in an upright position

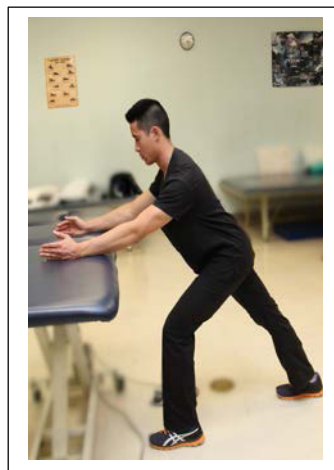
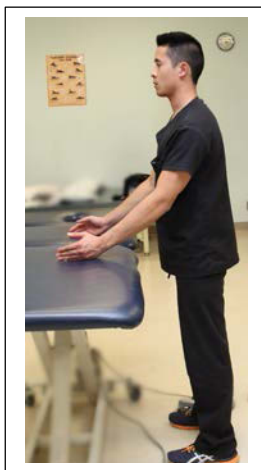
Reference: Kelley et al. Shoulder Pain and Mobility Deficits: Adhesive Capsulitis Clinical Practice Guidelines Linked to the International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health From the Orthopaedic Section of the American Physical Therapy Association. *J Orthop Sports Phys Ther* 2013;43(5):A1-A31.

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Exercises:

Numerous exercises exist for treatment of Adhesive Capsulitis – below are the most effective according to current research. Hold very gentle stretches for prolonged periods (30 seconds to minutes as tolerated). There might be soreness during your exercise, but if it decreases after your exercise and icing then it is okay to continue. If the soreness lasts for many hours to days after exercise and ice, decrease the repetitions and intensity of your stretches. Do not stop completely.

- Body on arm flexion
 - 1) Place hands on counter
 - 2) Step backwards



- PROM external rotation with cane or doorway (supine, sitting, standing)
 - 1) Lie on your back with towel supporting the elbow
 - 2) Use your other hand to push cane backwards with your elbow bent

