

Shoulder Pain Stretches



Scan this QR Code to access a detailed video that enhances the information in this handout. It includes step by step guidance and visual demonstrations for each exercise.

What causes shoulder pain?

Shoulder pain can be complex, with many potential causes. However, in nearly every case, the muscles supporting the shoulder develop myofascial trigger points. These muscle knots cause the muscles to tighten, harden, and become painful. Contributing factors include injury, poor posture, repetitive movements, chronic tension, or even a bad night's sleep. Stretching these muscles can help relieve pain and promote recovery.

How is it treated?

Treating trigger points effectively requires a multimodal approach. Applying heat can enhance blood flow and relax muscles. Daily stretching of the affected muscles improves mobility and range of motion. Engaging in aerobic exercises, like walking or stationary bike, enhances circulation and reduces pain. Additionally, using a massage ball for acupressure therapy can help break up the muscle knots.

How to prevent shoulder pain?

Maintain good posture and avoid repetitive motions that strain the shoulder muscles. Regularly stretching and strengthening the muscles around the shoulder can help reduce tension and prevent the formation of myofascial trigger points. Incorporating movement breaks throughout the day and practicing relaxation techniques can also alleviate chronic tension.



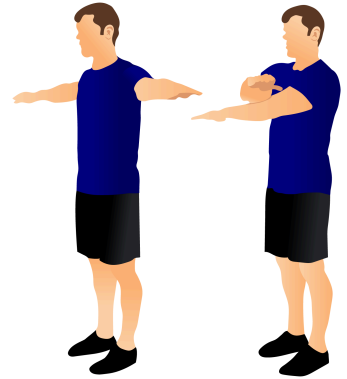
Shoulder Pain Stretches & Exercises

Consistent stretching can accelerate recovery and prevent recurrence. The following stretching regimen can be done in 5 minutes and should be done 2-3 times daily.

Active Shoulder Warm Up

Arm Swings

- Objective: increase blood flow, loosen the shoulder muscles
- Swing your arms forward, crossing them in front of your body, then swing them back while squeezing your shoulder blades together. Continue alternating between crossing your arms in front and opening them wide.
- Do this 10 times.



Shoulder Roll Forward

- Objective: increase blood flow, loosen the shoulder muscles
- Keep your arms relaxed at your side. Lift your shoulders up towards your ears and then gently roll your shoulders forward making a circular motion. Continue the motion back down and then back to the starting position.
- Do this 10 times.



Shoulder Roll Backward

- Objective: increase blood flow, loosen the shoulder muscles
- Keep your arms relaxed at your side. Lift your shoulders up towards your ears and then gently roll your shoulders backwards making a circular motion. Continue the motion back down and then back to the starting position.
- Do this 10 times.



Scapular Squeezes

- Objective: increase blood flow, loosen the shoulder muscles
- Start with your arms at your side. Pull your shoulder blades towards each other and squeeze for 1-2 seconds before returning to the starting position.
- Do this 10 times.



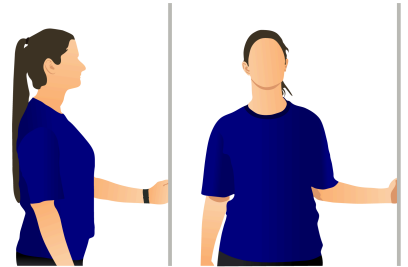
Anterior Shoulder Stretch

- Objective: improve flexibility of chest and anterior shoulder
- Clasp your hands behind your back and lift backwards and upwards. Pull your shoulders back to deepen the stretch.
- Hold this position for 30 seconds.



External Rotation Shoulder Stretch

- Objective: improve flexibility of external rotators
- Stand at a doorway or use the edge of a desk or counter. Place the inside of your forearm against the hard surface. Gently lean your body away until you feel a stretch in the outer back shoulder.
- Hold this position for 30 seconds.



Posterior Shoulder Stretch

- Objective: improve flexibility of posterior shoulder
- Bring your arm across your chest and bend at the elbow. Use your other hand to press the arm closer to your chest. You should feel a stretch in the back of the shoulder.
- Hold this position for 30 seconds.



Inferior Shoulder Stretch

- Objective: improve flexibility of the inferior capsule of the shoulder
- Lift your arm overhead and bend at the elbow. Use your other hand to press downwards. You should feel a stretch at the bottom of the shoulder.
- Hold this position for 30 seconds.



Internal Rotation Shoulder Stretch

- Objective: improve flexibility for internal rotation
- Hold a towel or belt in one hand behind your back. Grab onto it with the hand of your affected shoulder. Gently pull upwards with the top hand which will in turn lift the bottom hand higher up the back. You should feel a stretch in the lower front of the shoulder.
- Hold this position for 30 seconds.

