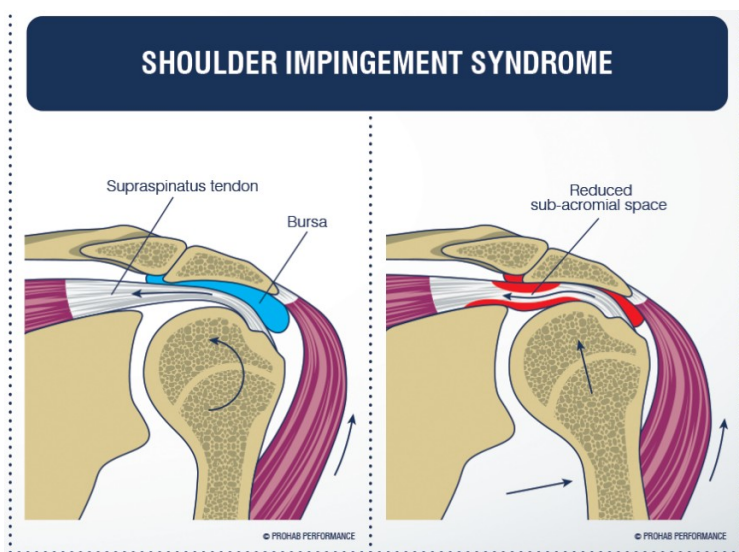


ADVICE SHEET FOR SHOULDER IMPINGEMENT

WHAT IS SHOULDER IMPINGEMENT

Shoulder impingement occurs when the rotator cuff tendons in your shoulder are trapped and compressed during movements. This causes the tendon to become irritated and swollen within the sub acromial space (the passage beneath the acromion and the humerus).



WHAT CAUSES SHOULDER IMPINGEMENT

- Traumatic injury: fall
- Overuse: repeated movement causes the rotator cuff to be in constant contact with the outer edge of the acromion/shoulder blade and repetition can cause the cuff to swell
- Overhead activity of the shoulder: repeated activity from swimming, lifting, painting, or golfing
- Posture: Rounded shoulders closes the sub acromial space and can cause degenerative compression and irritation of the rotator cuff.

SYMPTOMS

- Difficulty reaching overhead or behind back
- Shoulder pain at rest or when lying on shoulder
- Muscle weakness when reaching or lifting
- Pain on the top and outside of the shoulder joint

HOW TO LOOK AFTER IT AT HOME

- Anti-inflammatory medications: Aspirin and ibuprofen are used to help relieve the pain.
- Temporarily reduce use of shoulder: Relax and do not engage in overhead activity.
- Daily pain free stretching.
- Avoid repetitive activities.
- Improve posture to increase the sub acromial space.

PROFESSIONAL TREATMENT

Seek a Chartered Physiotherapist and they can help create a regime that is appropriate for your condition. The aim of rehabilitation is to reduce pain and inflammation, improve mobility of the shoulder, and to strengthen any muscles that may have been weakened. You should be sure to not strain your shoulder any more so you need professional help to tell you how much your shoulder can handle. Physiotherapy treatment may include:

- Dry needling
- Rotator cuff exercises
- Shoulder blade exercises
- Balance exercises
- Soft tissue massage
- The use of supportive taping

PREVENTION

- Preparation: Do not do too much too soon. If you are starting to get into shape quickly, seek a trainer for advice so you do not over exert yourself with improper exercises.
- Balance muscles: Muscles in the back can become unstable if people focus on their muscles in front of the shoulder or chest. Without balance, it can predispose you to a rounded shoulder posture and cause inflammation.