



Physical Therapy Saint Helena
Injury Rehabilitation & Prevention by Paul Wiesner

How to Help Shoulder Pain in 6 Simple Steps.

1. Avoid a slouched posture. Slouching pulls the shoulder forward, placing more stress on the rotator cuff and joint, which can increase irritation.
2. Heat and ice are both effective at reducing pain. Do not use for more than 15 minutes. Unfortunately, neither will help with the healing process directly, but they can be helpful to help one sleep, which is when we heal the most.
3. Avoid sleeping on the painful side. Compression of the joint can cause increased irritation, which can increase joint swelling and muscle guarding. Sleep on the opposite side with a pillow supporting the painful shoulder.
4. Easy exercises. Stretching can feel good, but sometimes it can make things worse, especially if you are trying to stretch a muscle that is “tight”. Instead of stretching, movement exercises help to bring blood flow to the injury to allow the muscle to relax. Two easy exercises are:
 - a. Shoulder squeezes. While standing or sitting, squeeze your shoulder blades back and down, as if you are trying to put them in your back pocket. Hold them for 2 seconds and do 10 repetitions. Do multiple times throughout the day, to help assist with your posture.
 - b. Shoulder external rotation. In the same position as the shoulder squeezes, keep your elbows at your side and open your arms to the side (be sure to maintain the elbows touching your side). Open the arms twenty times taking the range to a small amount of pain, if any. Do this 2-3 times per day.
5. Avoid lifting objects over your head. If you must, be sure to squeeze your shoulder blades together, increasing the stability of the shoulder girdle.
6. If your symptoms do not improve in one week, talk to your physical therapist for further evaluation and treatment.

Joint Napa Valley Physical Therapy

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