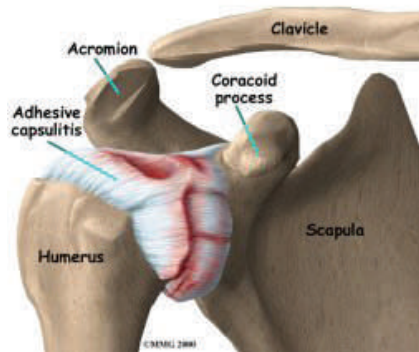


# A Patient's Guide to Frozen Shoulder



## What is a Frozen Shoulder?

Frozen shoulder, or **adhesive capsulitis**, is a condition that begins with a gradual onset of pain and a limitation of shoulder motion. It may follow an injury or arise gradually with no injury or warning. The discomfort and loss of movement can become so severe that even simple daily activities, such as lifting one's arm, become difficult. As the use of the shoulder becomes less, the motion becomes almost completely inhibited, thus the name "frozen shoulder".

## What's the Shoulder Joint, and what does it do?

The shoulder is made up of three bones: the *scapula* (shoulder blade), the *humerus* (upper arm bone), and the *clavicle* (collarbone). The *joint capsule* is a watertight sac that encloses the joint. The walls of the joint capsule are made up of *ligaments*. Ligaments are soft connective tissues that attach bone to bone. The joint capsule has a considerable amount of slack, so the shoulder can move through a large range of motion. In frozen shoulder, inflammation in the joint capsule makes this normally loose tissue very tight. This seriously limits the shoulder's ability to move, causing the shoulder to "freeze".

## How does Frozen Shoulder develop?

Frozen shoulder may begin after a shoulder injury, fracture or surgery. It can also start if the shoulder is not being used normally. Changes in biomechanics causes increased stress, internal pressure and increased friction that leads to inflammation, and eventually the formation of scar tissue within the shoulder. Scar tissue restricts the translation or movement of the capsule and adjacent tissues, causing friction, and leading to inflammation. Normally, the shoulder can move through a large range of motion. However, as the scar tissue builds up and motion is reduced, the capsule of the shoulder becomes irritated and inflamed. Therefore, with the reduction of motion, inflammation and scar tissue formation on the joint capsule, pain is produced and the shoulder "freezes", becoming very painful with movement.

## What does Frozen Shoulder feel like?

The symptoms of frozen shoulder are primarily shoulder pain and a reduced range of motion in the joint. The range of motion is the same, whether you are trying to move the shoulder yourself or someone else is trying to move the arm for you. There comes a point in each direction of movement when the motion simply stops, as if something is blocking it. At this point, the shoulder usually hurts and can also be quite painful at night. The tightness in the shoulder can make it difficult to do regular activities such as getting dressed, combing your hair, reaching across a table or scratching your back.

## What is the treatment for Frozen Shoulder?

In our office, we use a combination of chiropractic treatments, Active Release Technique (ART) soft tissue manipulation, and rehabilitation to allow restoration of proper biomechanics to the shoulder, neck and spine.

# Ways We Treat Your Frozen Shoulder:

## Chiropractic

- Chiropractic is a natural healing approach that promotes a healthy, pain-free lifestyle without the use of drugs or surgery. An adjustment is a hands-on therapy that delivers a controlled pressure that restores proper motion to a restricted joint.

## Active Release Technique (ART)

- ART is a manual therapy that corrects muscular and soft-tissue problems caused by the formation of adhesive or scar tissues. Adhesions/scar tissue occur naturally in the body in response to overuse or cumulative trauma.

## Flexibility

- Good flexibility enables muscles and joints to move through their full range of motion. Poor flexibility leads to a higher chance of injury to muscles, tendons and ligaments.

## Strength

- Strength training is essential for the rehabilitation of any injury. When new tissue is laid down to repair an area, it is very thin and weak. If this tissue is not properly re-strengthened, it can lead to re-injury.

## Proprioception

- Proprioception describes the body's ability to react appropriately to external forces. It also helps rebuild proper motor patterns of the body. Proprioceptive exercises form the basis for the agility, strength, and endurance for complete rehabilitation.



With our combination of different treatments, resolution can be seen in over 90 percent of frozen shoulder cases. Effective treatment of the neck and shoulder, or any soft tissue injury, requires an alteration in tissue structure to break up the restrictive cross-fiber adhesions and restore normal function to the affected soft tissue areas. When executed properly, this process substantially decreases healing time, treats the root cause of the injury, and improves athletic performance. Active Chiropractic and Rehabilitation Clinic is very successful at treating this type of injury. Our therapies remove restrictive adhesions between both the superficial and deep tissue structures along the entire kinetic chain. This comprehensive approach creates a complete, time efficient healing process.



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