

Having Shoulder Pain for No Reason?

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Adhesive Capsulitis, commonly known as “Frozen Shoulder” typically presents with the complaint of shoulder stiffness and decreased range of motion. Frozen shoulder classically consists of shoulder pain that is slow in onset and presents without any radiographic abnormalities. Usually the discomfort is localized near the lateral aspect of the shoulder and the patient is unable to sleep on the affected side. A problem list may include decreased functional use of the arm during daily activities, inability to reach the hand behind the back, shoulder pain with lifting or with reaching, marked decrease in shoulder range of motion and shoulder muscular weakness.

The shoulder is a complex joint that relies on natural smoothness to glide it into the multiple planes of motion for which it is responsible. When the surfaces of the shoulder have lost this smoothness, the capsule surrounding the joint can become stiff, leading to self-perpetuating cycle of stiffness leading to non-use, and non-use leading to more stiffness.

The typical treatment for adhesive capsulitis generally consists of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs for decreasing pain and inflammation, the use of heat and cold packs before and after exercises respectfully, and exercises consisting of stretching, range of motion and strengthening.

Recovery or outcome of adhesive capsulitis varies depending on the severity of the limitations. If shoulder dysfunction is diagnosed early with little limitations the recovery may take a few months, but if there is major limitations recovery could take up to 12 months.

If you may be experiencing shoulder pain for no reason and are noticing decreased shoulder range of motion and strength that is interfering with your everyday life activities, you may want to contact your physician or call your local therapist.