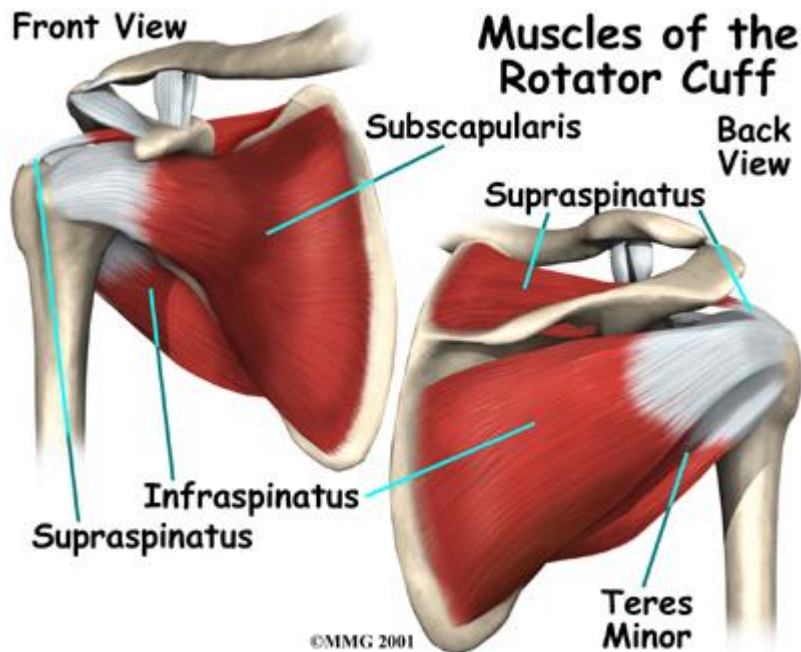


The Shoulder: Rotator Cuff Problems

Other terms: Rotator cuff tendinitis, rotator cuff tears, tendon degeneration of the shoulder

What is the Rotator Cuff?



The rotator cuff is composed of four small, short muscles that originate on the scapula and pass around the shoulder where their tendons merge and attach on the ball of the shoulder joint.

The 4 muscles are:

- 1) Supraspinatus
- 2) Infraspinatus
- 3) Teres Minor
- 4) Subscapularis

These muscles are important as they:

- 1) Stabilize the shoulder joint for basic movements of the upper limb
- 2) Are major movers of the shoulder joint in turning in and out the shoulder; for example waving your arm to say goodbye, drawing open or close a curtain.

There are several reasons why you may have rotator cuff problems:

- 1) Acute and traumatic injuries such as falling directly on the shoulder, lifting heavy items beyond your tolerance, sporting injuries
- 2) Degenerative conditions which may affect wear and tear of the tendons
- 3) Overuse syndromes and Repetitive Strain injury due to occupational demands or sport requirements

- 4) General weakness of the shoulder musculature due to a sedentary lifestyle
- 5) Poor posture overtime leading to unnecessary strain to the rotator cuff

What you may feel:

- 1) Pain with movement and sometimes night pain
- 2) Weakness
- 3) Catching angles with pain at the shoulder joint
- 4) Poor postural endurance
- 5) Possible clicks in the shoulders
- 6) Constant soreness and aches at the shoulder joint

How to manage your pain:

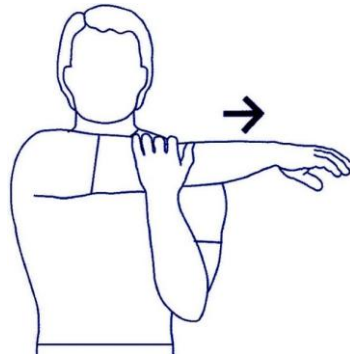
- 1) Simple analgesics and anti-inflammatory medications/injections may help initially and you may visit a doctor to advise you on the medications
- 2) If the pain has been there for a period of time especially if after 1-2 weeks and medications are not helping you solve the problem fully → Physiotherapy will be able to help
Physiotherapy will be effective in assessing and treating the weakness, posture, range of movement as well as any tightness in the musculature involved at the shoulder.

It is always advisable for you to seek help early to allow the shoulder to be assessed and treated as soon as possible to avoid any long term problems.

The next page will show some simple stretches that can help you with stiffness and tightness of the shoulder joint but it is recommended that you consult your Physiotherapist for safe and effective exercise prescription.

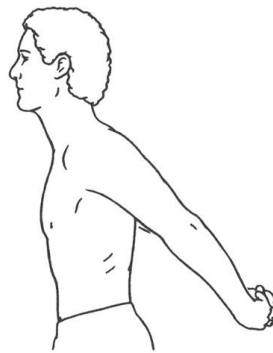
It should be done pain free.

Some recommended exercises to help with muscle tightness:



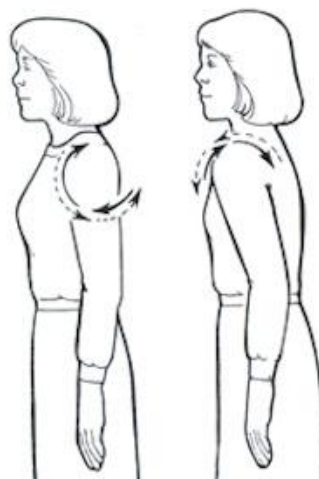
Posterior Capsule Shoulder Stretches

Hold 30 secs repeat 5 times
3 times a day



Pectoral Stretches for the Front Shoulder

Hold 30 secs repeat 5 times
3 times a day



Shoulder Roll Backs

Repeat 15 times
3 times a day