

Paul D Maitino DO FAOAO Hip Knee Shoulder & sports medicine Oklahoma City OK

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Shoulder Impingement

Shoulder impingement is the condition of inflammation of the tendons of the shoulder joint. It is one of the most common causes of pain in the adult shoulder. The shoulder is a 'ball-and-socket' joint. A 'ball' at the top of the upper arm bone, humerus, fits neatly into a 'socket', called the glenoid, which is part of the shoulder blade, scapula. Shoulder impingement is also called as swimmer's shoulder, tennis shoulder, or rotator cuff tendinitis.

Causes

Impingement results from pressure on the rotator cuff from part of the shoulder blade (scapula) as the arm is lifted. It is more likely to occur in young and middle aged people who engage in physical activities that require repeated overhead arm movements. The pain may be due to a "bursitis" or inflammation of the bursa overlying the rotator cuff or a "tendonitis" of the cuff itself. In some circumstances, a partial tear of the rotator cuff may cause impingement pain.

Symptoms

Individuals with shoulder impingement may experience severe pain at rest and during activities, weakness of the arm and difficulty in raising the hand overhead.

Diagnosis

Diagnosis involves physical examination by the doctor where in the doctor checks for the possible range of movements with the affected shoulder. X-rays and MRI scans may be ordered to see the injury and inflammation.

Conservative Treatment Options

Shoulder impingement can be treated with rest, ice packs, anti-inflammatory drugs, and avoiding the activities involving the shoulder. Physical therapy may be advised to strengthen the muscles and steroid injections may be given if pain persists.

Surgery

Arthroscopic surgery is recommended if the rotator cuff tendons are torn and to remove the bony spurs.