

*Welcome to 2009 and the first newsletter from Sheffield Osteopathic Clinic. Each month we hope to provide you with information about your health. If you would like us to focus on a specific topic, please let us know.*

*This month we are concentrating on*  
***Shoulder Pain.***

Shoulder pain is a common complaint which can seriously impact on your lifestyle. It can vary from a constant ache to a sharp pain on certain movements. It may be uncomfortable to lie on your side at night. There may be pain when you lift or carry items, when you try to put your coat on, or even the task of washing and combing your hair may prove difficult. Your shoulder may ache after repetitive movements, e.g. ironing, hammering or typing.

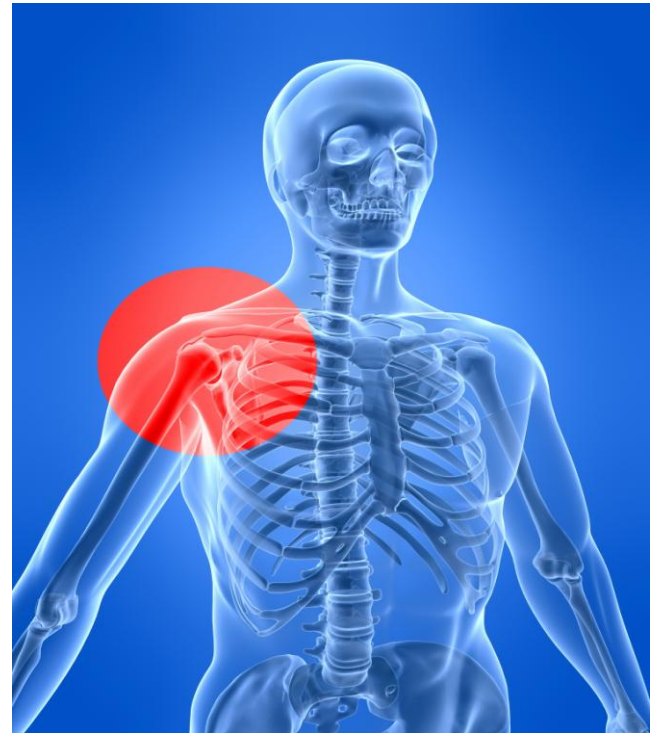
The shoulder is a complex joint which relies heavily on muscles to provide stability whilst it can move through a huge range of movement. There are many structures in the shoulder which can cause pain or the pain can come from other regions of the body related to the shoulder. Sometimes shoulder pain can be referred from organs such as the heart or gall bladder so it is important to have shoulder pain investigated.

Common disorders include arthritis, tears of the muscles and tendons, painful arc syndrome and 'frozen' shoulder.

Pain in the shoulder and arm is often prone to misinterpretation. It is important to work out if the pain is from the shoulder or coming from the neck, thorax or abdomen.

True shoulder pain is localised around these joints and rarely extends below the elbow. Pain down the whole arm into the hand, sometimes with "pins and needles", indicates a problem in the neck.

At the clinic we are fully qualified to identify what is causing the problems and give you an explanation. You will receive hands-on treatment using soft tissue techniques, massage, stretching, movement and manipulation. Advice will be given about posture and exercises when necessary.



## Case 1

Mrs E strained her shoulder 3 months before coming to the clinic whilst lifting pots in the garden. The pain was not severe but she felt it when lifting and carrying. Over the three months the pain had gradually got worse and she was finding it increasingly difficult to put clothes on, do her hair and to reach the top shelf in the kitchen. She was waking in the early hours of the morning with pain in her shoulder. When Mrs E came to the clinic the examination showed that movement in her shoulder joint was very reduced and there was pain with using certain muscles. She was diagnosed with a frozen shoulder and inflammation of a muscle tendon. Frozen shoulder is a very painful condition which can develop following a muscle strain. The condition takes 18 months to 2 years to get better without treatment. Mrs E had a course of treatment and after each visit she had more movement in the shoulder joint and her pain gradually reduced. Mrs E returned to full health after 4 months of treatment and exercises at home.

By Deborah Smith



## Case 2

A lady in her mid-30's attended with a recent history of frozen shoulder. Osteopathy and ultrasound had helped by reducing the pain and getting the shoulder moving again, but she plays tennis at her local club and felt her shoulder was still weak. She was also getting headaches frequently. Sports massage was used to reduce the muscle tension in her neck and shoulders, improve her shoulder mobility and increase strength in her weak shoulder. After 4 treatments she reported fewer headaches, a gradual return to strength in her shoulder and less aching after playing tennis. Stretches and postural advice were given to help her manage her symptoms at home. She continues to attend every 3-4 months for maintenance and prevention.

By Claire Yeoman



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## Case 3

A 35 year old man came to the clinic complaining of a dull ache in his right shoulder/upper arm (around the bicep area). He had begun to notice the discomfort two weeks ago after he was painting his ceiling at home. As the two weeks progressed the discomfort in his arm began to increase to a strong dull ache and in the last week just gone, he also noted that his neck had begun to feel a little stiff. He assumed that he had just strained or pulled a muscle in his arm (while painting) and that it would get better over time, however the pain seemed to intensify over the two weeks and there was no sign of it healing.

On examination of the gentleman, tension was found in the muscles of his right arm and shoulder, and his neck movement was noticeably affected. On further detailed examination it was found that a nerve in the gentleman's neck had become trapped and because the nerve travels from the neck down to the bicep area, the arm was where the main discomfort was being felt.

With treatment to the neck to release the pressure on the nerve, and some gentle massage to the shoulder and arm, the symptoms quickly began to relieve themselves.

This patient was a fine example of how, while you may feel that the problem lies where the most pain/discomfort is felt, this is not always the case, and the root cause of the problem may actually lie somewhere else. Symptoms may take longer than normal to resolve if the root problem is not treated.

By Dan Warin

*If you have related to the above scenarios or have something similar, please do not hesitate to contact us and see how we can help.*

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