

# Frozen Shoulder

## Introduction

People suffering from frozen shoulder will have significant limitation in the shoulder motion and they usually report a disturbing vague shoulder pain that may last for a few weeks to months. There is usually no identifiable precipitating incident. Typically, there are 3 phases in frozen shoulder including the inflammatory phase, progressive stiffness phase and the resolution phase. In the initial inflammatory phase, there is severe shoulder pain and the patient have difficulty lying on the affected sided. Patients usually avoid moving the shoulder and put the arm in resting position. After the inflammatory phase, the disturbing pain begins to subside and there is progressive shoulder stiffness associated with shoulder discomfort in motion. After several months to years, shoulder pain improves and range of motion may be regained partially.

## Diagnosis

Frozen shoulder represents part of the shoulder pathology, an orthopaedic surgeon will perform a detail examination of the shoulder to look for any associated shoulder disease such as shoulder impingement, rotator cuff tear, bicipital tendinitis, etc. They may also use x-ray, ultrasound and MRI of the shoulder to look for the pathology within the shoulder joint.

## Treatment

The aim of treatment is pain relief and restoration of the motion. Patient may respond to conservative treatment which includes analgesics for pain relief and physiotherapy to improve pain and function. Local injection of steroid into the shoulder joint may be offered in selected cases to relieve pain. Orthopaedic surgeon may recommend surgery for patient who had persistent pain, persistent stiffness or dealing with those associated pathology.