

The Shoulder

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The shoulder is the most mobile joint in the body completing a wide range of movement, which also makes it unstable without proper muscle support, ligament, tendon and labrum support.

Bones:

The shoulder joint is made up of:

1. Humerus: long bone in upper arm
2. Scapula: "shoulder blade"
3. Clavicle: "collar bone"

Muscles:

There are many muscles that attach to the bones above, but the prime muscles that stabilize the shoulder and are prone to injury are:

1. The Rotator Cuff: 4 muscles that make up the general group are Supraspinatus, Infraspinatus, Subscapularis and Teres Minor. These four muscles help stabilize the shoulder complex and maintain the humeral head (end of humerus) in the glenoid fossa (part of scapula).
2. Biceps

How to Keep it Strong!

Strengthening will depend on your diagnosis as to not exacerbate any symptoms you may be having. One good strengthening exercise for your rotator cuff muscle is to lay on your left side with right arm on top of trunk and elbow bent to 90 degrees. Hold a soup can in your right hand and slowly raise fist towards ceiling, while maintaining right elbow on trunk and then slowly lower fist.

Stretches will also depend on your diagnosis as to not exacerbate any symptoms you may be having.

To stretch out front of shoulder, stand in a doorway with arms up at 90 degrees on door frame and slowly walk forward until a stretch is felt in front of chest. Remember to keep head aligned with your body.

To stretch out the back of shoulder, cross one arm in front of chest and use other arm to gently pull across, just above the elbow.

Common Pediatric Shoulder Conditions:

Fractures: commonly within the growth plate of bones due to a traumatic injury of a fall

Tendonitis & Impingement Syndrome: commonly caused due to overuse and inflammation of the tendons or bursa in the shoulder

Subluxation or Dislocation: commonly seen when the humeral head comes out of place partially or fully when arm is elevated out to the side (abduction) and rotated backward (external rotation)

Little League Shoulder: commonly seen with repetitive overhead motions of various sports

Multidirectional Instability (MDI): combination of laxity in multiple motions which could be due to various factors such as overuse, muscle imbalance or previous injury. .