

Shoulder Ache

Pain and stiffness in your shoulder may be due to conditions affecting your tendons (tendinitis, bursitis, rotator cuff tendinitis) or joints (arthritis, arthrosis).

It can also be caused by activities involving repetitive strain, bad posture or overstrain when raising your arms above your head, especially if the joint is already weakened.

If your shoulder is badly injured and you cannot move it, you may be suffering from adhesive capsulitis or “frozen shoulder”. The treatment is different in this case.

Pain in the shoulder area can also be brought on by problems in the spine or other conditions.

How to relieve the pain

Avoid lifting heavy weights, making brusque movements and activities that put a strain on your shoulder. Don't do any physical exercise until you feel better. When you dress, start with the bad arm first and when you undress start with the good arm.

During the most painful phase it may help to **rest your shoulder** (but just for 3 or 4 days at most).

If you have had the pain for some time, apply **dry heat to the area**, for about 20 minutes, three or four times a day. If it has started aching recently then you should apply cold.

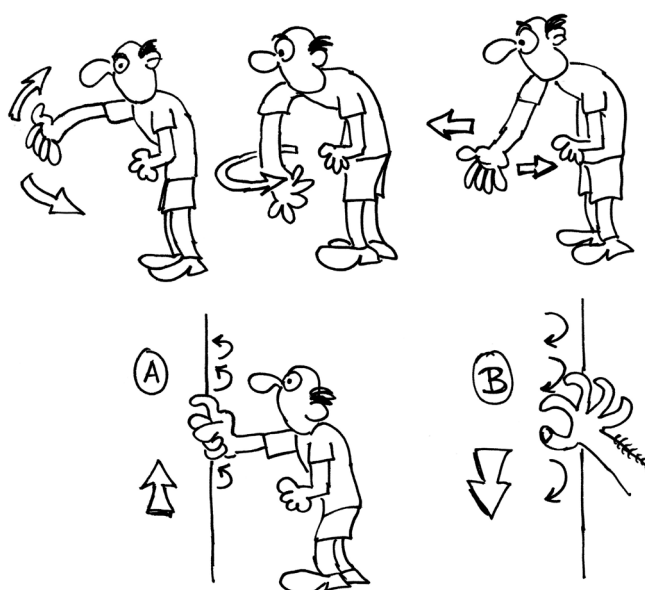
Unless your doctor says otherwise, you can take **painkillers or anti-inflammatories**.

It is important to make gentle movements with the shoulder progressively so as to improve joint mobility and strengthen the muscles surrounding the joint, without forcing it or causing pain; these are the limits of its mobility.

Gently move your arms, as if you were stretching, or swimming.

Pendulum exercises: Lean forwards, letting your injured arm hang freely. Do these exercises:

- Circular movements, first clockwise and then anticlockwise.
- Forwards and backwards movements.
- Sideways movements from right to left.



Finger walk: Stand facing the wall; place your fingertips on it, at head height; move your hand slowly upwards, walking your fingers up the wall in small steps, as high as you can reach without feeling any pain. Then gradually walk your fingers back down to the starting point.

Repeat each exercise five times, three or four times a day, and gradually increase the number of repetitions, without making your shoulder ache.

Consult your doctor if PAIN appears when your shoulder is resting, with inflammation and reddening of the joint, or if it starts to ache after a blow, a sudden movement or you feel a distinct loss of strength.