

# Don't Shrug Off Shoulder Pain

You may not give your shoulders much thought until a stiff, aching joint makes activities like carrying groceries or buckling a child into a car seat nearly impossible.

The shoulder is capable of a wider and more varied range of motion than any other joint in your body, yet its flexibility is what makes it vulnerable to instability and injury.

## Protect Your Shoulders.

Use these tips and exercises to help avoid shoulder pain and injury before they occur.

- 1 Don't carry heavy shoulder bags.** If you must lug heavy contents, use a backpack.
- 2 Listen to mom's advice.** Standing up straight promotes good posture, preventing future problems.
- 3 Take regular breaks at work if your job involves repetitive motion or sitting at a computer all day.** Briefly stretching your back and shoulders during the workday can help too.
- 4** If activity causes soreness or stiffness, **give your shoulder adequate rest** before engaging in the activity again.
- 5 Ease into a sport you've been away from for a time.** For instance, don't spend hours on the tennis court if you haven't played since last summer. Tennis players, swimmers and ballplayers have the highest risk of shoulder injuries.

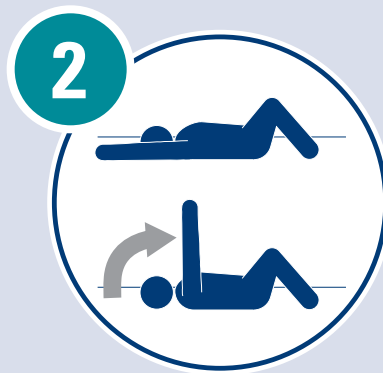
## Shoulder Pain Exercises

Exercise and stretch regularly to keep your shoulder muscles and joints strong. Here are a few exercises we recommend.



### Seated Scapular Retraction

Seated at the edge of a chair, find neutral posture. With elbows bent at 90 degrees squeeze the shoulder blades together while keeping the chin neutral or slightly tucked. **Two sets of 10.**



### Cane Stretch for Range of Motion

Laying on either the floor or a bed, holding a cane/ golf club/ dowel roll with a wide grip, allow the cane to slowly fall back overhead using the non-painful shoulder as the guide. **Repeat this movement, ten times with a 3 second hold.**



### Pendulums

At the edge of a bed, place one hand on the edge for support and bend from the hips to allow the painful shoulder to hang. Make small circles in one direction and then switch to the opposite direction. **Two sets of 10 each direction.**