

Tips, Strategies and News You Can Use To Achieve Optimum Health...For Life!

Mar 2007 Issue

## Frozen Shoulder: It Can Strike Out Of Nowhere

What You Need To Know About This Painful And Common Condition

By Rodney Hawkins, MPT

It's Monday morning. Still sleepy, Jenny rolls over and hits the snooze button on her alarm clock. As she does this, she notices a slight amount of pain in her left shoulder. Unconcerned, she goes about her normal daily routine. Throughout the day, she notices that she is not using her left arm as much as usual.

As time goes on, she notices the pain getting worse. One night while preparing dinner, she reaches up to grab some dishes out of her cupboard. However, she realizes she cannot lift her arm all the way up and the pain is worse than ever. A few more days go by and her condition worsens. She eventually calls her physician to receive medical treatment. Her physician gives her a diagnosis of "Frozen Shoulder" and refers her to a physical therapist for further treatment.

### What Is Frozen Shoulder?

Jenny's story above is an example of a condition called "Frozen Shoulder". At any one time, we'll be treating a few people who are suffering from this condition. In fact, a lot of people don't realize how common it is.

The medical term for Frozen Shoulder is *Adhesive Capsulitis*. This is a term commonly used to refer to a shoulder condition consisting of **decreased range of motion and increased pain**. The purpose of this article is to review causes, pathology and signs, symptoms, impairments and functional limitations associated with Adhesive Capsulitis.

Adhesive Capsulitis is defined by the loss of extensibility (muscle and the surrounding soft tissue ability to stretch). The joint capsule can also become inflamed which creates pain and limits range of motion.



Robert Inglis, MPT, CSCS



Rodney Hawkins, MPT

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Usually, people experience pain on the **outside** of the shoulder, followed by a reduction in range of motion. This happens because the person becomes reluctant to move the joint or arm.

In time, the pain can go away. However, this **doesn't** mean the person is "out of the woods" yet. The limited joint mobility will continue. This changes the way the muscles in the shoulder activate/contract, and commonly produces a "hiking" condition of the shoulder. What is "hiking"? The answer is simple. Hiking means you go to lift your arm up, and instead of lifting just your arm, your entire shoulder moves up!

The decreased muscle activity and shoulder hiking together can create *shoulder impingement* (which we talked about a few issues ago). This means the pain, swelling and inflammation gets worse. **It becomes a snowball effect.**

Frozen Shoulder can last from one to three years in duration. Yes, THAT long. It can also be broken up into three stages based on clinical findings:

### Stage 1: The Freezing Stage

Here, people experience

increased shoulder pain and decreased use and flexibility due to changes in the soft tissue of the joint.

### Stage 2: The Frozen Stage

In the frozen stage, people have **decreased pain** and intensity, BUT also have **decreased range of motion when they move their shoulder in certain directions**. In the frozen stage, they also might have impairments leading to shoulder "hiking" as well as altered shoulder movements.

### Stage 3: The Thawing Stage

This stage is characterized by pain - but most people only experience pain while moving or stretching *in a particular direction*. Some people may start to return to normal shoulder movements or biomechanics and normal function.

Now, looking at this progression, you might think to yourself, "well, it sounds like this condition actually corrects itself". Not exactly.

Looking back at the freezing stage, most people have fairly normal shoulder movement and muscle function. But this is also the stage **where the pain starts**. Once the pain sets in, you may experience more and

more muscle guarding. Muscle guarding is a way for someone to protect their injured body part. It's a natural response to pain or injury.

Many patients don't even realize they're doing this. The problem is that **muscle guarding and inflammation leads to decreased function and weakness of the rotator cuff muscle group**.

You stop using the muscle because of the pain and inflammation which causes muscle inhibition and results in the muscle "shutting down". As the pain intensifies, the ability to move the shoulder decreases.

### The Snowball Effect

Once people reach the frozen stage, limited flexibility is at its maximum. This loss of movement occurs because of the inability to elongate the soft tissue around the shoulder, which alters the normal shoulder movement.

So in a nutshell, here's what happens:

First, pain occurs. Pain leads to decreased use. Then decreased use leads to limited range of motion. And so on. It's a snowball effect.

## Different Types of Frozen Shoulder

Let's talk a little bit about the different types of frozen shoulder we see at Physical Therapy Specialists.

First of all, Frozen Shoulder is either Primary or Secondary.

**Primary Frozen Shoulder:** This is a spontaneous Frozen Shoulder and it may occur without a specific cause. The patient notices their shoulder being a little bit "sore", which results in decreased movement and use. As time goes on, the pain intensifies and flexibility becomes more limited. At this point, the person normally seeks medical attention. Jenny's story at the beginning of this article is a great example of *Primary* Frozen Shoulder.

**Secondary Frozen Shoulder:** This is where Frozen Shoulder is the result of surgery or a shoulder injury. This can either be a rotator cuff injury; shoulder tendonitis, impingement syndrome or any other injury involves the shoulder. The actual injury doesn't directly cause the condition. What happens is that the injury creates a situation where the patient doesn't use his or her arm secondary to the pain they are experiencing.

Lack of use, immobilization and lack of stretching results in limited range of motion.

## Who Does Frozen Shoulder Strike?

Normally frozen shoulder occurs in people between 40 and 60 years of age and it effects women much more common than men.

There are a few general things that we do to help this condition including, manual therapies, therapeutic exercise and therapeutic modalities.

## Therapeutic Exercise:

Before treatment is initiated, the patient undergoes a **thorough evaluation**. We're looking for a couple of things. First, how much pain is there? Are the exercises going to aggravate the pain and make the condition worse? Is the patient going to respond to exercise? If severe pain is present before resistance is applied, the condition is considered to be "irritable" and the intervention should not be as aggressive. If the pain is present after resistance is applied, the patient is not considered "irritable" and exercise can be more aggressive in nature.

Once that is established, the intensity level and amount of exercise can be planned. Normally, exercise techniques include **passive range of motion, active range of motion, active assisted range of motion, isotonic, isometrics, and progressive resistance exercises**. I know many of these terms may not make sense to you, so email me with questions or ask me in person!

## Manual Therapy

This includes mobilization of the soft tissue and/or the shoulder

joint. These techniques can be used to reduce pain, edema (swelling and water retention), inflammation, and joint restriction, while increasing range of motion and tissue extensibility.

## Therapeutic Modalities:

Therapeutic modalities are helpful in rehabilitating patients with frozen shoulder. In the early stages, we use anti-inflammatory and pain medications to reduce its severity. During the latter stages, the use of physical agents can be used to increase tissue extensibility and reduce the effects of treatment irritation. Modalities commonly used with frozen shoulder patients include; therapeutic ultrasound, various forms of electrical stimulation and ice and heat.

Physical therapy can be extremely effective in restoring range of motion, flexibility, strength and most importantly, function, to patients who have been diagnosed with frozen shoulder. Physical therapy can play an important role in reducing the severity, duration and functional limitations for those who suffer from this condition. At Physical Therapy Specialists, we use therapeutic exercise, manual therapy techniques and therapeutic modalities along with critical thinking to insure optimal outcomes for our patients.

If you have any questions about this article, or think you (or a patient of yours) may be suffering from frozen shoulder, please contact me at: **(714) 528-9400**.

-- Rodney Hawkins, MPT

# Your 12-Month Plan For Making This The Healthiest Year Ever!

Part Two - Continued From Last Month

By Robert Inglis, MPT, CSCS

If you remember the start of this special series of articles, you know that **simple steps** are the key to long-term change, a better body, greater health and a longer life. It's all about making incremental adjustments to your life.

Last month we focused on the importance of **planning** and **being conscious** about what you eat. I discussed grocery shopping strategies, planning meals and writing down your exercise goals. All that was a great start.

Now, this month we're going to take your new healthy 12-month plan **a step further**. I'm going to reveal another very simple "shift" - or change in your lifestyle - that will allow you to reap these **important benefits**:

- Improved HDL / LDL cholesterol levels and lower triglyceride levels
- Reduction in your chance of sudden death from heart attack and stroke
- Improvement the flavor of everything you eat - your friends will think you're a master chef!

What is this simple change? Well, it's a **dietary** change. A change in the way you cook.

Here it is: Starting this month I want you to start **replacing your butter, margarine and shortening with 100% pure olive oil**. Olive oil has a high smoke point, mixes well with most foods

and can be substituted for butter and other *unhealthy, saturated* fats in most recipes. Not only that, but olive oil's distinctive flavor enhances the taste of most dishes you cook.

Olive oil has long been known to **lower heart disease risk**. That's because it's a mono-unsaturated fat. Unlike butter and shortening which are solid at room temperature, olive oil is liquid at room temperature. Most experts widely agree that olive oil is the healthiest fat available. Take a look at the low heart attack and stroke rates in Mediterranean countries where intake of olive oil is high (Italy and Spain come to mind), and you'll see the positive impact olive oil has on health. There is no healthier fat for cooking than 100% pure **olive oil**.

You can use olive oil for scrambling or cooking eggs, drizzle it on vegetables, use it in salad dressings, in baked foods and even fry with it! While it's true that olive oil is a bit more expensive than other vegetable oils, to my mind the health benefits are worth it.

## Choose "Extra Light" Olive Oil.

Now, if you're not particularly fond of extra virgin olive oil, don't despair. There is another option for you that has **all the health benefits of extra virgin olive oil**...and *has no flavor whatsoever*. This is "extra light" olive oil. This is olive oil which has been filtered with most of the particulate matter (parts of olives, etc.) removed. The "extra light" does NOT mean it has less calories, it simply means it has a lighter taste.



When olive oil is processed this way, it removes both the **flavor** and **color** of extra virgin olive oil. While extra virgin olive oil is a dark green color and almost opaque, extra light olive oil is clear. You might even mistake it for Canola oil. The good news is that while the flavor is removed, extra light olive oil **retains the same heart-healthy benefits**. It's transparent in taste. You can substitute it for many non-Mediterranean dishes and it won't alter the taste of the original dish. People won't be able to tell the difference between that and shortening or margarine.

## You Can Use Both Extra Virgin As Well As Extra Light Olive Oil.

In my home, we cook with both extra virgin as well as extra light olive oil, depending on the dish. If you're cooking a Mediterranean dish where the full flavor of olive oil is appropriate, choose extra virgin olive oil. In other dishes where you don't want such a strong flavor, go with extra light olive oil.

Bottom line: olive oil is a much better choice for all your cooking needs than butter, margarine (some brands are loaded with trans-fats which are even worse for your heart and waistline than pure butter) or shortening. After a few months of using olive oil, you'll never go back to butter or margarine again!

Hang in there, keep up the good work and stay tuned for April's "Small Step"!

You can reach me at: [mycorept@yahoo.com](mailto:mycorept@yahoo.com)

## From Our Healthy Kitchen: Delicious Lemon Chicken

Here is a dish that uses olive oil for cooking as I suggested in the last article. It's a dish the whole family will enjoy. With tons of healthy monounsaturated fat, and lean protein, this recipe will feed a family of four.



### Ingredients

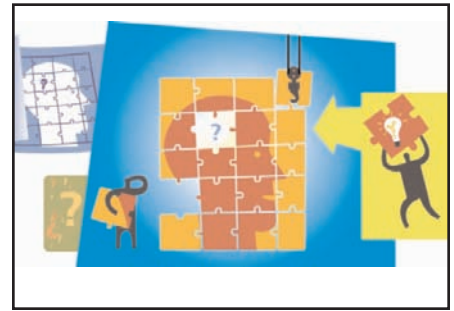
- 1 lb. of skinned boned chicken breasts - cut into strips
- 1 medium onion - chopped
- 2 garlic cloves - crushed
- 2 tbs of olive oil
- 1 tbs of cornstarch
- 1 - 13 ¾ oz can of chicken broth
- 1 carrot sliced diagonally
- 3 - 4 tbs of fresh lemon juice
- ½ tsp of grated lemon rind
- ½ tsp of salt
- 1 cup snow pea pods
- 1 tbs of dried parsley
- 1 ½ cups of minute rice

### Directions

1. Saute chicken, onion and garlic in olive oil until chicken is lightly browned.
2. Stir in cornstarch and cook 1 minute.
3. Add broth, carrots, lemon juice, lemon rind and salt. Bring to a full boil.
4. Stir in peas, parsley and rice. Cover, remove from heat and let stand 5 minutes.
5. Serve and enjoy!

# “Ask The Expert”

## Your Questions and Answers



**Question: “I’ve heard the term ‘boomeritis’ mentioned lately. I know this has something to do with baby boomers and sports injuries. What does ‘boomeritis’ refer to specifically?”**

Answer: Boomeritis refers to sports-related injuries suffered by a growing number of the more than 80 million North American baby boomers who are refusing to slow down. They then leave themselves open to a number of complaints ranging from minor strains and sprains all the way to troublesome stress fractures and chronic musculoskeletal problems.

### Overachievers Need New Guidelines

It's time for a "new fitness prescription" for these aging overachievers, according to Dr. Nicholas DiNubile, orthopedic consultant for the Philadelphia 76ers. "As a whole, boomers are the first generation of North Americans who are staying active on their aging frames," he says. "Because of their aging frames, however, many are experiencing 'boomeritis,' which includes tendonitis, bursitis, arthritis and sports-related injuries."

To help all these soon-to-be seniors stay strong, a number of

organizations have teamed up for an awareness drive designed to keep the Woodstock generation boomeritis-free. The year-long campaign - spotlighting physically active boomers - will appear in major magazines and newspapers with the provocative headline, "There's a secret to beating injuries. Get the right team."

### The Right Team For Baby Boomers

The right team includes both physical therapists and orthopedic surgeons. As you know by reading this newsletter each month, physical therapists are health care providers who specialize in the **prevention, assessment, treatment and rehabilitation of injuries and illnesses** that occur in active people of all ages. Orthopedic surgeons are essential for diagnosing and treating bone, joint and muscle-related injuries and getting boomers back in action."

### Boomers Are Making An Impact

True to form, boomers are an economic force to be reckoned with. Boomers join health clubs at a stupendous rate - up 135 percent between 1987 and 2001. They also

account for nearly one-third of all North Americans who participated in **bicycling, basketball, baseball, running** and other sports in 1998, according to the latest statistics. They like to stay in shape.

### Boomers Are Prone To Injury More Than Ever Before

Unfortunately, that same year, boomers suffered more than **one million sports injuries**, which amounted to more \$19 billion in medical costs North America-wide. Between 1991 and 1998, sports-related injuries among baby boomers increased by a staggering **33 percent**.

"The most common types of injuries that occur to baby boomers are often the **result of years of overuse** to the musculoskeletal system - old injuries that occur again, the normal 'wear and tear' to tendons and joints, and muscle loss associated with aging," Dr. DiNubile explains. "Because of age-related changes, boomers' bodies are just more vulnerable."

"It is important that baby boomers learn to listen to their bodies and seek expert help to prevent injuries from happening," Ms.

Albohm adds.

## Flower Power Forever

Here are some tips to lessen your chances of suffering from 'boomeritis':

- Customize your workouts based on your individual fitness level and goals.
- Find your "weak links" or points of vulnerability. They will need special attention in your workout design.
- If you have muscle, bone or joint problems, consider **lower impact aerobic routines** and lighter loads with weight training.
- Embrace **cross-training** for

**truly balanced fitness.** Include aerobic or cardiovascular activities, strength training and stretching.

- Always **warm up** before exercise or sports.
  - Take **calcium** and **vitamins** to keep your bones and joints healthy and strong.
  - Learn to **listen** to your body.
- If you have problems with aches and pains, see an orthopedic surgeon or a physical therapist. They can both help you get on the path to recovery.

And most of all - revise that silly mantra that says 'No pain, no gain' to 'No pain ever again!'



# Health Trivia - Test Your Health And Fitness Knowledge!

This month's quiz is full of questions from the main article on *Frozen Shoulder*. See how many of these you can get right...**and no peeking!** Good luck!

**QUESTION #1:** How many phases or stages are in frozen shoulder?

- a.) 7
- b.) 9
- c.) 3
- d.) More than 15

**QUESTION #2:** True or False: "Men are at a higher risk for developing frozen shoulder".

- a.) TRUE
- b.) FALSE

**QUESTION #3:** Which of the following contributes to Secondary frozen shoulder?

- a.) Surgery
- b.) Diabetes

- c.) Osteoarthritis
- d.) Obesity and lack of exercise
- e.) None of the above

**QUESTION #4:** True or False: "Frozen shoulder can last as long as three years"

- a.) TRUE
- b.) FALSE

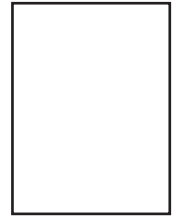
**QUESTION #5:** True or False: "Surgery is the only option for most cases of frozen shoulder."

- a.) TRUE
- b.) FALSE

**Answers:**

1) c 2) b 3) a 4) a 5) b

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## “Here’s How To Stick To Your New Year’s Resolution! Let Us Help You!”

If you made a New Year’s Resolution to “finally get into shape”, but don’t know where to start, you’re **not alone!** Many people have the **desire** and **motivation** to get into shape, but **lack the knowledge**. They don’t know what exercises to do, how to do them and how to avoid injury. This can be frustrating and stand in the way of getting in shape. **And we don’t want that to happen!** This is where Physical Therapy Specialists comes in. You see, our resident personal trainer, Brian, has designed a “get in shape” program *just for you!* Whether you’re getting back into shape after a long layoff, or are starting fresh, this program is designed for people just like you. Brian is exceedingly

patient and won’t push you harder than you can handle. He understands where you are right now and will take you through the program at your pace: one step at a time. Consistency is the key to long-term weight loss, cardiovascular conditioning, flexibility and strength. You’ll never believe how much energy you’ll have...and how great you feel after starting Brian’s program! So don’t be afraid: Reach out and give us a call **right now**. Ask Brian about his special program today and get a FREE session with a true fitness PRO! Call NOW!

**(714 ) 528-9400**