



Looking after your Shoulders

This arrangement is stabilised by ligaments and the rotator cuff muscles.

In order to achieve the mobility that is needed, innate stability is compromised. It is therefore the responsibility of other structures to help with stability. It is easy to see how a small upset in that balance can affect the correct functioning of the joint.

Injuries to the shoulder as a result of impact or overuse are common. Problems like fractures and dislocation are the result of external forces and often require emergency intervention. Problems such as muscle tears, strains, frozen shoulder or impingement can often have less obvious causes and can be longstanding. It is important to get assessed, have appropriate investigations and a diagnosis in order to know how to treat the problem appropriately. If your problem requires surgical treatment there will be a strict rehabilitation process to follow under the surgeons guidelines.

The anatomy of the shoulder can be a little overwhelming. Most people would describe it as a simple 'ball and socket' joint but there is so much more to it than that!

The shoulder is a unique structure that permits 360 degrees of movement (the most of any joint in the body). It is able to move very quickly through this range, for example when you are playing tennis. It provides the stability to allow us to use our arms and hands in a delicate or intricate way. It also gives us the strength to pull our bodies through water when swimming or up mountains if climbing etc. Not surprisingly a problem with the shoulder can severely impact our daily life.

It is important to think about the whole shoulder girdle and not just the joint. The shoulder girdle consists of the collar bone (clavicle) at the front and the shoulder blade (scapula) at the back. Unlike the hip, which is a naturally stable 'ball and socket' joint, the shoulder is better described as a golf ball balancing on a tee!

What can you do to help yourself?

Good posture - If you sit slumped with round shoulders and a rounded back you will compromise the movement of your shoulders. Nerves from your neck can get pinched, some muscles get stretched and

weak, others tight and over active. The simplest thing you can do for yourself is to watch how you hold yourself.

Other useful exercises:



Strengthen the muscles that pull the shoulder blades back -

Sit or stand holding onto a rubber band with both hands. Pull the band with both arms pushing the shoulder blades down and together.



Gentle mobility like a pendulum -

Let your arm hang relaxed straight down. Gently swing your arm forward and backward then sideways.

For further help and advice call the Droitwich Knee Clinic on: 01905 794858

Specialists in

- Knees
- Shoulders
- All Physiotherapy
- Podiatry