

Impingement Syndrome

Diagnosis Explanation:

Impingement syndrome occurs when the **rotator cuff tendons and bursa** become **compressed** between the **acromion (top of the shoulder blade)** and the **humerus (upper arm bone)** during arm movements. This leads to **pain, inflammation, and limited range of motion**, especially with **overhead activities, reaching behind the back, or lifting**. It is common in **athletes, weightlifters, and individuals with repetitive overhead motion jobs**.

Specific Work Modifications:

- **If your job requires standing or walking:** Avoid **repetitive overhead reaching**, and take breaks to stretch and rest the shoulder.
- **If your job involves lifting:** Avoid **lifting objects above shoulder height** or **repetitive pushing and pulling**. Lift with both arms when possible.
- **If your job is desk-based:** Keep **shoulders relaxed**, ensure **proper arm support**, and adjust the **monitor to eye level** to prevent slouching.
- **Avoid:** Overhead movements, repetitive arm lifting, and prolonged static positions that cause discomfort.

Specific Activity Modifications:

- **If you play sports:** Avoid **throwing, swimming strokes, and repetitive overhead movements** until pain subsides.
- **If you do weightlifting:** Avoid **overhead presses, dips, bench presses, and pull-ups**; instead, focus on **controlled, pain-free movements**.
- **If you do yoga or Pilates:** Modify poses to **avoid deep shoulder extension and excessive arm weight-bearing**.
- **Avoid:** Repetitive overhead movements, sudden jerky arm motions, and activities that cause pain.

Recommended Supplements:

- **Collagen Peptides** - 10g daily for tendon and joint repair.
- **Vitamin C** - 500mg daily to promote collagen synthesis.
- **Glucosamine & Chondroitin** - 1500mg/1200mg daily for joint health.
- **Omega-3 Fatty Acids** - 1000mg daily to reduce inflammation.
- **Turmeric (Curcumin)** - 500-1000mg daily for natural pain relief.

Recommended Nutrition and Hydration:

- **Increase Lean Protein** (chicken, fish, tofu, eggs) to support tendon repair.
- **Eat Anti-Inflammatory Foods** (berries, leafy greens, turmeric, nuts) to reduce

swelling.

- **Consume Hydrating Foods** (cucumber, watermelon, citrus) to maintain tendon flexibility.
- **Limit Processed Foods & Sugars** to prevent inflammation.
- **Hydration:** Drink **8-10 cups of water daily** to support tendon recovery.

Home Exercise Prescription (Rehabilitation for Shoulder Impingement)

Early Phase (0-2 Weeks, Reducing Pain & Inflammation):

- **RICE Protocol** - Rest, Ice (15-20 min, 3x/day), Compression, Elevation.
- **Pendulum Exercises** - Lean forward, let the arm hang, gently swing in small circles, **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Shoulder Blade Squeezes** - Pinch shoulder blades together, hold **5 seconds**, repeat **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Wall Walk (Forward)** - Face a wall, use fingers to "walk" the arm up as high as comfortable, **hold 5 seconds, repeat 10 reps, 2x/day**.

Strengthening Phase (2-6 Weeks, Improving Stability & Function):

- **Isometric Shoulder Holds** - Press palm against a wall without moving the shoulder, hold **5 seconds**, repeat **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **External Rotation with Resistance Band** - Keep elbow at **90 degrees**, rotate forearm outward, **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Wall Slides (Lateral Movement)** - Stand sideways to a wall, slide affected arm up and down, **10 reps, 2x/day**.

Advanced Phase (6+ Weeks, Restoring Strength & Preventing Recurrence):

- **Lateral Arm Raises (Light Resistance)** - Raise arms to shoulder height, **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Scapular Stability Exercises (Resistance Band Rows)** - Pull resistance band toward chest, **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Modified Push-Ups (Wall or Knees)** - Maintain control, **10 reps, 2x/day**.

Helpful Books:

1. *The Shoulder Pain Solution: Simple Exercises to Prevent and Recover from Injury* - John M. Kirsch, MD.
2. *Overcoming Shoulder Pain: A Guide to Rehabilitation and Recovery* - Peter T. J. Barrett.

Click here for more orthopedic patient information.

Contact a Key West orthopedic clinic or reach out to Dr. Jason Pirozzolo.