

How To Manage Acute Shoulder Pain

Eric Wong aka Coach E here. I created this checklist for you if your pain is a 7+ out of 10. When you have this level of pain we say you're in the "acute" pain phase.

NOTE: *the type of pain this will help with is the type that kind of creeps up on you over time, which we refer to as "wear and tear". Not from a sudden fall or other serious traumatic event. In these cases, go to your doctor before following the guidelines that follow.*

The primary goals in the Acute Pain Phase are to:

- Decrease pain to 6 or below within 1-2 weeks, allowing you to start working on the root causes
- Relax the muscles of the shoulder and neck through active - not passive - means (more on this below)
- Activate the stabilizer muscles of the shoulder including the rotator cuff and scapular muscles to prevent further damage from occurring

Before we get into the tips to decrease your pain, there are two important considerations:

a) Be 100% sure there's nothing more serious at play. Other symptoms you may have that warrant a trip to the doctor include: unexplained weight loss, fever, swelling and/or a recent dentist trip.

If you have any of these symptoms, go to your doctor ASAP to rule out anything something serious that must be dealt with immediately.

b) Stop doing anything that exacerbates the pain whether that's something at home, work or sport, because it could prolong your rehab. Unless you're a professional athlete, don't push through the pain when you're in the acute phase.

You'll have to determine if you're doing anything like this right now and stop it, temporarily, for up to 1-2 weeks. I know it sucks to not be able to do the active things you love, but this is in your best interests long-term and when you follow our advice, you'll be able to get back to it with fewer setbacks.

Now, here are 7 tips (with links to additional resources where appropriate) to help you decrease your pain to a 6 or below within the next 1-2 weeks:

- 1 Ice the shoulder for 15 minutes, 3 times/day and also place ice in the armpit not just on top of the shoulder
- 2 In the shower perform contrast therapy alternating 30 sec as cold as possible with 30 sec of as hot as possible 3-5 times
- 3 Relax tense shoulder and neck muscles using your breath: take 5 breaths inhaling for 4 sec and exhaling for 4 sec, on the exhale picture all of the shoulder and neck muscles getting more and more relaxed with each and every exhale
- 4 If sleep is a problem, try sleeping on your back or if that's still painful in a reclined position with a pillow propped under your arm
- 5 STOP performing static stretches (where you stretch and typically hold 30-60 sec); while they may feel good temporarily, static stretching is like pulling on an already fraying rope - it can cause more fraying and tearing
- 6 Instead of static stretching, perform active exercises like the Pendulum and Rotator Cuff Isometrics - [watch this video for more](#) (from 7:25-10:20)
- 7 The lateral neck muscles often tense up so just like with the shoulder, avoid static stretching and perform active exercises like the [Wall Neck Side Bend](#)

Additional Resources for You

We have a lot of good content available for free on YouTube that outlines our unique approach to pain and injuries but it can be overwhelming to search through, so here's a handy list relevant to acute shoulder pain. Browse through the comments people have left to get an idea of the kinds of results following our methods may yield.

[SHOULDER PAIN: Our 3 Phase Approach from Severe Pain to Pain Free](#) - This video gives you the scientific reasoning behind our approach and programming.

[3 Keys to Rehab a Rotator Cuff Tear & Avoid Surgery](#) - Here you'll get a taste of our programming for rotator cuff tears.

[Exercises to Fix Forward Head Posture](#) - Posture and shoulder function are intimately related, so if you've got forward head posture it's critical you work on it for long-term relief of shoulder pain.

[Infraspinatus & Lower Trapezius Activation Exercise](#) -The upper traps often compensate for weak lower traps/infraspinatus and this exercise helps you restore that balance.

This document will guide you through the Acute Pain phase and should get your pain to a 6 or below within 1-2 weeks at which point it's time for you to progress to what we call the "Rehab Phase".

In the Rehab Phase you'll begin to address the various root causes of your shoulder pain, which includes getting all of the muscles in the shoulders activated and strong and improving shoulder range of motion, as well as working on adjacent areas that affect the shoulder including the neck, thoracic spine, core and upper arm/elbows.

Most approaches focus on where it hurts - the shoulder - but without addressing these adjacent areas, the shoulder pain often returns leading to continuing to have to manage pain.

I have created a comprehensive program that outlines our approach in an easy-to-follow format that you can do in the comfort of your own home called the Shoulder Pain Solution. It will guide you through 60+ unique exercises organized in 11 routines that take just 15 minutes, 4-6 days/week (your choice on frequency).

I invite you to follow the program to effectively address the root causes of your shoulder pain so you can move freely and without pain now and for the long-term.



[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)

Because you're here proving you're someone who is taking control of their movement health, I'd like to offer you a special action-takers discount, just click the link above for full info.

To your active life!

ERIC AKA "COACH E"