

Shoulder Impingement Syndrome



Overview

This is a painful pinching of soft tissues in your shoulder. It happens when these tissues rub and press against a part of your shoulder blade called the "acromion." This can irritate your rotator cuff tendons, and also a soft sac called the "subacromial bursa."

Causes

You're at risk for shoulder impingement syndrome if you do a lot of overhead motions with your arms. It's a problem for swimmers, baseball players and tennis players. It's also a problem for painters and construction workers. It can result from a shoulder injury. And sometimes we don't know why it develops.

Symptoms

If you have shoulder impingement syndrome, your shoulder may feel tender. It may swell. You may feel pain and stiffness when you lift and lower your arm. You may feel sudden pain when you reach above your head. Your pain may spread from the front of your shoulder to your arm. The pain may get better with rest, but it may still hurt.

Treatment

Your shoulder may improve with medications and rest. You may benefit from steroid injections and physical therapy. If these don't help, you may need surgery. Your healthcare provider can create a care plan that is right for your needs.

