

Frozen Shoulder

What Is It?

Frozen shoulder, also known as adhesive capsulitis, is a condition characterized by stiffness, pain, and limited range of motion in the shoulder joint. It typically develops gradually over time and can significantly impair daily activities and quality of life.

How To Find Out If You Have A Frozen Shoulder?

If you suspect you may have a frozen shoulder, consider the following indicators:

- Gradual onset of shoulder pain and stiffness.
- Difficulty moving the shoulder joint, particularly when reaching overhead or behind the back.
- Pain that worsens at night, especially when lying on the affected side.
- Limited range of motion in the shoulder joint, making it challenging to perform daily tasks.

What Are The Symptoms?

Symptoms of a frozen shoulder may include:

- Persistent shoulder pain, often worsening over time.
- Stiffness and reduced flexibility in the shoulder joint.
- Difficulty performing daily activities that require shoulder movement, such as dressing, combing hair, or reaching for objects.
- Pain that radiates down the arm.

What Are The Causes?

The exact cause of the frozen shoulder is not fully understood. However, several factors may contribute to its development, including:

- Previous shoulder injury or surgery.
- Prolonged immobilisation of the shoulder joint, such as wearing a sling or cast.
- Certain medical conditions, such as diabetes, thyroid disorders, or cardiovascular disease.
- Inflammatory conditions or autoimmune disorders.
- Hormonal changes, particularly in women.

How Is It Treated?

Treatment for frozen shoulder aims to reduce pain and stiffness while improving shoulder mobility. Common treatment approaches include:

- Physical therapy: Stretching and strengthening exercises to improve range of motion and shoulder

strength.

- Pain management: Over-the-counter or prescription medications to alleviate pain and inflammation.
- Corticosteroid injections: Injections of corticosteroids into the shoulder joint to reduce inflammation and pain.
- Heat and cold therapy: Alternating between heat and cold packs to alleviate pain and improve mobility.
- Joint mobilization techniques: Manual manipulation of the shoulder joint by a physical therapist or healthcare provider to improve flexibility.
- Home exercises: Performing prescribed exercises regularly at home to maintain shoulder mobility and strength.

What Are The Treatment Options?

In severe cases where conservative treatments fail to provide relief, surgical intervention may be considered. Surgical treatments for frozen shoulder may include:

- Arthroscopic capsular release: A minimally invasive surgical procedure to release tight and thickened joint capsule tissues, allowing for improved shoulder movement.
- Manipulation under anaesthesia (MUA): A procedure where the shoulder joint is manipulated while the patient is under anaesthesia to break up scar tissue and improve the range of motion.