

# JERSEY CENTRAL

## PHYSICAL THERAPY FITNESS

### Physical Therapy and Frozen Shoulder



Frozen shoulder, also known as *adhesive capsulitis*, is a condition that restricts mobility of the affected shoulder. A healthy shoulder joint has a greater range of motion than any other joint in the human body. In this condition, the capsule around the shoulder joint becomes inflamed, scarred, thickened, or contracted causing stiffness in the shoulder joint. Even though trauma can sometimes lead to frozen shoulder, the cause is largely unknown.

Known causes or risk factors for frozen shoulder include:

- *Age and Gender* – Frozen shoulder typically occurs in patients who are 40-60 years of age and for reasons still unknown, is **twice** as likely to occur in women as men.
- *Diabetes* – Endocrine disorders (diabetes and thyroid issues) are a leading cause of frozen shoulder.
- *Shoulder surgery* – Patients who undergo shoulder, chest, or breast surgery are at risk for developing frozen shoulder. This is especially true for patients whose recovery process includes long periods of immobilizing the shoulder joint.
- *Systemic diseases* – Conditions like heart disease and Parkinson's disease have been linked to frozen shoulder.

Typical symptoms of frozen shoulder are:

- Dull, aching shoulder pain
- The inability to move your shoulder in a wide range of motion
- Difficulty with common everyday activities such as getting dressed or putting on glasses.
- Pain when sleeping or otherwise applying pressure to the affected shoulder.

If you suspect frozen shoulder, schedule a visit with your physical therapist. A physical examination will be performed to determine the extent of involvement.

There are three stages of frozen shoulder.

- **Stage 1:** Freezing Stage-Usually lasts between 6-12 weeks, is by far the most painful, but also the shortest stage of frozen shoulder. You will notice restricted motion in this stage.
- **Stage 2:** The “Frozen Stage”: Over the next several weeks (or months), pain will subside, but the stiffness increases, and you notice a loss of motion. At this stage, the right kind of care is critically important to prevent long term damage.
- **Stage 3:** The “Thawing Stage”: In this final stage, range of motion steadily improves. While the thawing stage steadily brings relief, it can take many months to years to return to a degree of normalcy.

Our physical therapists play a critical role in the treatment of frozen shoulder using a dynamic program of joint mobilization, exercises, modalities and home exercises.

### PLEASE CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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