

METROCREST ORTHOPEDICS AND SPORTS MEDICINE

Shoulder Impingement (Bursitis, Tendonitis)

One of the most common injuries leading to shoulder pain and loss of functions is that of shoulder impingement. In simple terms the bursal tissue becomes pinched between the bones of the shoulder and subsequently thickened and inflamed. This leads to bursitis, tendonitis and associated pain with loss of function. The recommended treatment for this problem is as follows:

- 1) *Anti-inflammatory medications* (Advil, Aleve or prescription). Getting the pain under control is important. The shoulder will not function properly if the pain is not controlled.
- 2) *Contrasting*- Heat followed by ice for 15 minutes each 3 times daily. This helps in pain control.
- 3) *Stretching*- The shoulder often becomes tight leading to increased pain. Stretch several times daily with a slow sustained stretch.
- 4) *Injections*- if the above do not work then one or several injections may be of help. This is done with cortisone, which is a potent anti-inflammatory.
- 5) *Physical Therapy*- This is often helpful to help get the pain under control and obtain normal motion in the shoulder. Usually a trial is given before further diagnostic testing is performed.
- 6) *Testing*- if pain has been present for a long time or if the above are not working then often times other tests such as MRI, CT scan or bone scanning may be indicated.
- 7) *Surgery*- this is a last resort. If all else fails then a shoulder arthroscopy is usually used to confirm the diagnosis and treat the problem.

Good Luck!