

## Frozen Shoulder.

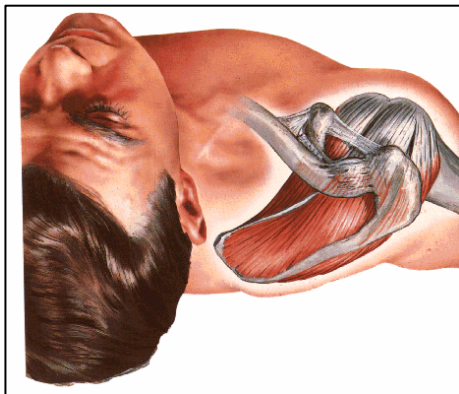
### What is a Frozen Shoulder?



The top of the humerus bone fits into the socket of the shoulder to form the glenohumeral joint (See Figure(s) 1). A frozen shoulder (also known also as adhesive capsulitis) is a condition more common in older players. The joint and the surrounding capsule become inflamed, sometimes as a result of a previous injury (such as a fall playing soccer), but often occur for no apparent reason.



Figure(s) 1: Shoulder Anatomy.



### What are the symptoms?

The symptoms of a frozen shoulder are pain and stiffness in the shoulder joint, with very limited range of motion – the player will be unable to move their shoulder. The player will also have pain at night, especially when lying on the affected side. Researchers believe that a frozen shoulder passes through three phases. In the first phase the shoulder has reasonable movement, but is very painful. The second phase is characterised by pain and the movement becomes very limited (frozen). Finally, in the third phase, the shoulder loosens up and returns to normal function. This whole process can take up to 18

months, however some players could recover within 10-12 weeks of proper rehabilitation and treatment.

### What causes a frozen shoulder?

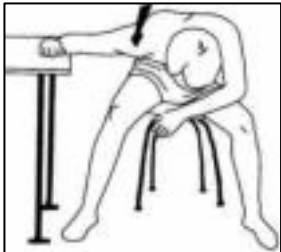
There is no conclusive evidence as to what causes a frozen shoulder. Potential cause include, i) poor or altered healing responses after a player has sustained an injury, ii) genetic reasons, which make some individual players more prone to a frozen shoulder and iii) poor posture may cause a shortening in one of the shoulder ligaments which can lead to a frozen shoulder.



## Do soccer players get frozen shoulders?

Frozen shoulders are rare in soccer players, especially younger players, but may occasionally occur in the older soccer player.

### What can the player do?



If a player thinks they may be developing a frozen shoulder they should seek the advice of a sports injury professional. There is little players can do themselves without an accurate diagnosis and medical advice. They may try some stretches initially – if there is little pain (See Figure 2).



Figure 2: Shoulder Stretch.

### What can a sports injury professional do?

A physiotherapist or a sports doctor can advise on mobility exercises, medications and specific treatment depending on which phase the frozen shoulder is at (See Figure 3). Sometimes, cortisone injections are given, particularly during the initial phase when there is significant pain or stiffness. The cortisone injection may provide some temporary relief from symptoms. Advice on returning to training and playing soccer will also be given.



Figure 3: Mobilisation.