



POSTURE COULD BE THE CULPRIT BEHIND YOUR SHOULDER PAIN

Do everyday tasks, such as sitting at your desk or standing to cook dinner, cause pain between your shoulder blades or in your shoulders and neck? Your discomfort could be due to your posture.

Our posture affects most of the activities we do every day, and poor postural habits can cause problems throughout your body, including the shoulder. For example, sitting or standing with your head protruding forward can adjust the positioning of your entire shoulder complex. Your shoulder blade rolls forward, which forces the shoulder joint into an abnormal orientation.

These changes to our posture change how well our shoulder muscles work and how the joints function. Over time, they can lead to shoulder pain and dysfunction. Fortunately, our team of physical therapists knows how to address these issues and guide you to the results you are looking for!

If you believe your posture is contributing to your shoulder pain, call Hands-On Physical Therapy to schedule an appointment and discuss your treatment options.

How Posture Affects the Shoulders

When you slouch, the shoulder joint is positioned forward, resulting in the muscles and tendons performing movements in a way they're not designed to do. This stresses the shoulder joint and potentially leads to long-term effects, such as tendonitis, nerve constriction, or even spine misalignment.

Here are three common postural errors and suggestions for correcting them before they become a problem:

- 1. Slouching While Seated:** It's easy to fall into a slumped posture when working at a desk—after all, your thoughts are elsewhere! But over time, sitting this way strains the muscles and can eventually cause pain. The issue with slouching doesn't come from doing it every now and then but from remaining in a slouched position. The best way to avoid this is to get into the habit of sitting tall. Sit upright, legs uncrossed a few inches from the chair's seat, and feet flat on the ground. A lumbar roll can help you maintain your posture, but you must also move around regularly. Try to get up and walk around every 30 minutes to an hour.
- 2. Text Neck:** This term describes a position where the head is tilted downward, and the shoulders are hunched over. It's essentially the position we take when using our cell phones. This posture is commonplace in desk jobs, as many people hunch over their keyboards. Over time, this can lead to tight chest muscles and weak upper back muscles. As your body gets used to this stance, it becomes hard to get out of it, making you more susceptible to injuring your shoulder and neck.
- 3. Rounded Shoulders:** This posture error is prevalent with activities requiring prolonged standing. It occurs when the shoulders and lower back are rounded forward instead of back, and the head and chest are slumped forward. Unfortunately, this posture contributes to difficulty reaching, lifting, and carrying objects. Daily tasks become painful and limited. This stature makes us susceptible to tension and strain in the upper back, shoulder blades, shoulders, and neck.



HOW PHYSICAL THERAPY HELPS YOU FIND RELIEF

The therapists at Hands-On Physical Therapy can help you identify the exact postural issues contributing to your shoulder pain. We'll perform a comprehensive physical evaluation, including several movement and postural screens, allowing us to pinpoint your pain's root cause.

We also offer on-site diagnostic testing, which can help us dig deep into the cause of your shoulder pain.

MSKUS (musculoskeletal ultrasound) tests allow us to easily evaluate your shoulder joint with real-time imaging to identify areas of weakness or impairment that might stem from poor posture.

EMG/NCV tests help us identify nerve and muscular disorders. They're particularly useful if you have radiating pain through your shoulder and arm.

Once we understand your unique situation, our therapist will develop a customized treatment program with several treatment techniques, including the following:

- Manual therapy for immediate pain management and improved mobility
- Therapeutic exercises to correct muscular weakness or imbalance
- Hands-on postural corrections to help you find the right spinal alignment for your body
- Lifestyle modifications and ergonomic suggestions for improved shoulder health no matter what you're doing

Call Today to Schedule an Appointment

If you are experiencing shoulder pain, contact us today for a consultation. Whatever the culprit, rest assured that our therapists will get to the bottom of your discomfort. We'll get your posture back where it belongs and help you feel good again!

Sources: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5659804/> • <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29985116/> • <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fphys.2020.541974/full> • <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4499985/> • <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5889545/> • <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5684019/> • <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31789300/>

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HOLIDAY RECIPE

CUT-OUT SUGAR COOKIES



COOKIE DOUGH

- 3 c all-purpose flour, plus more for surface
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp kosher salt
- 1 c (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 c granulated sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 tbsp milk
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract

BUTTERCREAM FROSTING

- 1 c (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- 5 c confectioners' sugar
- 1/4 c heavy cream
- 1/2 tsp pure almond extract
- 1/4 tsp kosher salt
- Food coloring, for decorating

Directions

In a large bowl, whisk flour, baking powder, and salt until combined. In another large bowl, using a handheld mixer on medium-high speed, beat butter and sugar until fluffy and pale in color. Add egg, milk, and vanilla and beat until combined.

Gradually add dry ingredients and beat on medium-low speed until combined and no dry streaks remain. On a clean work surface, shape into a disk and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate 1 hour. Preheat oven to 350°. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to 1/8" thick. Cut out shapes and transfer to 2 parchment-lined baking sheets. Freeze 10 minutes (so your shapes hold while baking!).

Bake cookies until edges are lightly golden, 8 to 10 minutes. In a large bowl, using handheld mixer on medium-high speed, beat butter until smooth, then add confectioners' sugar and beat until no lumps remain. Add cream, almond extract, and salt and beat until combined. Bake cookies until edges are lightly golden, 8 to 10 minutes. Let cool. Frost and decorate cookies as desired.

<https://www.delish.com/cooking/recipe-ideas/a45588530/cut-out-sugar-cookie-recipe/>

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