

## Managing Shoulder Pain

By Ian Murray – Registered Acupuncturist & Chinese Medicine Practitioner

If you suffer shoulder pain then you are not alone. Shoulder pain is the third most common musculoskeletal problem that takes a person to their GP after back pain and knee pain. When you understand how the shoulder joint is constructed you might understand why this is such a common problem. Although the shoulder functions as a ball and socket joint providing a wide range of motion, it is not a stable ball and socket like a hip. In the hip the ball is encapsulated by a bony socket. The shoulder consists of a very shallow bony depression and is supported by four main muscles to



form a socket that encapsulates the ball. These muscles are often referred to as the “rotator cuff”. Injury or weakness of any one of these muscles can often be referred to as “rotator cuff syndrome” or if the most commonly affected muscle is injured it is commonly called “supraspinatus tendonitis”. Damage to any of these structures can result in abnormal shoulder function and pain.

As the injured shoulder functions in an abnormal manner it leads to pain and reduced range of motion and can often irritate other structures resulting in an associated painful “impingement syndrome”. There are other types of shoulder pain apart from rotator cuff syndrome such as “frozen shoulder” or “bursitis”. To determine the nature of your shoulder pain a detailed history of your complaint is taken and specific muscle strength and range of motion testing is conducted. To confirm the diagnosis, imaging such as ultrasound or MRI may be required, but is not always essential.

To avoid becoming one of the 29% of chronic pain sufferers with shoulder pain it is important not to ignore an injured shoulder. Initially staying within a range of motion that doesn’t cause pain can help to prevent further injury and is key to a prompt recovery. Do not continue recreation or work activities that cause pain. Adequate pain relief is important not just for comfort but because in general pain inhibits repair. Exercises to strengthen weakened muscles and correct poor posture can improve shoulder function, take strain off the injured structure and prevent reoccurrence. Overly tight muscles are another obstacle to healing, and these can be released with massage and acupuncture. In well trained hands acupuncture can also be used to stimulate repair and reduce pain and inflammation to aid a quicker recovery. Herbal medicine may have a role to reduce inflammation and also speed up repair, especially in longstanding cases. In cases such as a full thickness tear other options such as surgery or a cortisone injection may need to be discussed with your GP.

## Enhancing Fertility Naturally



Deciding to start a family and finding that it isn’t as easy as expected can come as a big shock. Approximately 10-15% of couples are impacted by infertility, and of these up to 30% will be diagnosed with “unexplained infertility”, meaning that the usual tests don’t identify a specific barrier to achieving pregnancy.

The good news is that there is a lot that can be done to enhance natural fertility and a recent article in *Reproductive Biology and Endocrinology* sums these up well. We have more detailed nutritional and lifestyle tips in a separate brochure, but in summary the key factors are: • Good nutrition enhances both male and female fertility • Suitable multivitamins enhance fertility • Obesity reduces both male

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- Sinus & Hayfever
- Glandular fever
- Irritable Bowel (IBS)
- Plantar fasciitis (heel spur)
- Trochanter bursitis
- Achilles’ Tendonitis
- Shin Splints



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### Enhancing Fertility Naturally continued...

and female fertility as does being underweight, so work towards a health body weight • Exercise benefits both male and female fertility but again excessive exercise in women creates changes which reduce fertility • Seek help with stress • Avoid exposure to both cigarettes and air pollution • Avoid pesticides and heavy metals • Too much caffeine and alcohol also negatively impacts on fertility rates but there is no clear guide on what "too much" means (so perhaps just cut them out).

These findings simply show that when the body is healthy it works well and fertility is enhanced. The other issue to consider when discussing fertility is always age, and while fertility declines for men with age, the chance of getting pregnant naturally for women under age of thirty is far higher than for women aged 36 and over.

For thousands of years Chinese medicine has also linked the health of parents at the time of conception to the health of the baby.



New research from the University of Adelaide has drawn the same conclusion. Following the recommendations in this article doesn't just enhance fertility; it appears to improve the potential health of the baby as well.

A supervised detox is a great way to support these self-help initiatives and will often kick start weight loss and naturally regulate hormones as well. Acupuncture and Chinese medicine are also helpful through their role in reducing the effects of stress on the body, enhancing the production of healthy sperm and regulating hormonal cycles. Acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine can also treat some of the many other conditions that are also known to reduce fertility such as endometriosis and polycystic ovary syndrome. So the message is simple, when planning a family first work on your own health and wellbeing, and don't delay too long because age matters. Ian, Stephen and Ruth are all able to help with lifestyle, health and pregnancy planning.

### Did You Know?

- Weekly acupuncture treatment in the last four weeks or pregnancy leads to an easier birth.
- Acupuncture can turn a breach baby.
- Acupuncture can help with carpal tunnel syndrome.
- Acupuncture can be used for back and pelvic pain in pregnancy.
- Acupuncture can help with anxiety, depression and emotional problems.
- Chinese herbs and acupuncture help with post birth recovery.
- Acupuncture can help with colic in babies.

### Improve Your Sinus and Hayfever: What to Eat to Avoid Inflammation

Allergies can be very troubling and we offer a range of options in the clinic to assist with allergies from acupuncture and Chinese herbs to specialized naturopathic immune techniques. There are also a range of things that you can do for yourself as well. It has been found that people in Greece have very few reported allergies. One reason for this may be their diet which is high in antioxidant foods as well as the omega 3 oils found in fish. These foods can have anti-inflammatory effects on the body. This anti-inflammatory effect can benefit sinus, hayfever and some other allergies. The other side effect is a boost in energy and wellbeing.

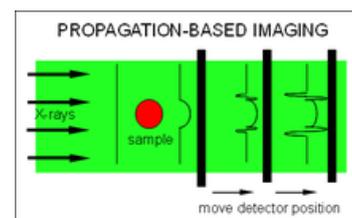
So, what foods can reduce and prevent inflammation?

Omega 3 fatty acids are found in fish such as wild salmon, cod, and sardines. Antioxidant foods include: tart cherries (also called sour cherries); avocado; beans; eggs; leafy greens (especially darker ones); broccoli (has a lot of

vitamin C and calcium); asparagus; bean sprouts; tomatoes; berries; apples and pears; nuts, green tea. Spices like ginger, basil, cayenne pepper and turmeric, a culinary spice often used in Thai and Indian food which contains curcumin which actively reduces inflammation. In Chinese medicine it is called Yu jin and also benefits the liver. Of course if you are sensitive to any of these foods it's best to avoid it. Try incorporating some of the above foods into your diet and look for a reduction in your allergy symptoms!

### Acupuncture Points identified by CT Scan

Have you ever wondered what makes an acupuncture point different to any other part of the body? In an exciting first acupuncture points have been objectively identified using a technique called "in-line phase contrast CT imaging with synchrotron radiation". As patients and practitioners have always known it matters to treat the correct



point for the correct condition, and acupuncture is much more than placebo. This research shows that acupuncture points have a higher density of micro-vessels and contain a large amount of involuted microvascular structures. Non-acupuncture points do not share these characteristics. This also suggests that acupuncture treatment involves more than only stimulating nerve supply as well. I can't wait for the next research installment reminding us of the modern relevance of an ancient understanding of the body. - See more at: <http://www.healthcmi.com/Acupuncture-Continuing-Education-News/1230-new-ct-scans-reveal-acupuncture-points#sthash.pF9QQnuN.dpuf>

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