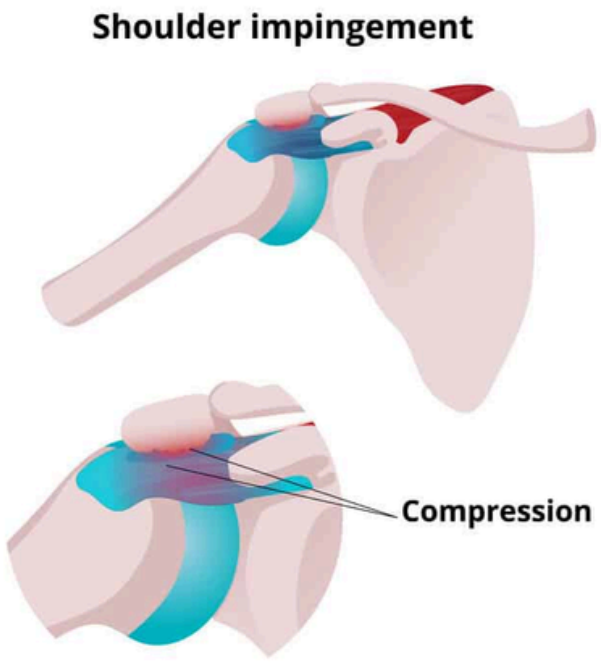
Rotator Cuff Related Pain

WHAT IS IT?

Shoulder impingement occurs when poor tracking of the glenohumeral joint causes irritation in the shoulder, leading to sensations like pain, catching, or clicking, especially during overhead movements. Ongoing impingement can irritate tissues such as the bursa and muscle tendons, potentially resulting in shoulder pain, arm pain, and tendon tears. This condition can lead to pathologies like shoulder bursitis, which can be diagnosed by a physiotherapist or doctor.



AFFECTING FACTORS

The shoulder functions like a pulley system, where changes in muscle contribution or starting position can disrupt smooth movement and joint tracking, leading to irritation or impingement. Key factors affecting shoulder movement include:

Posture: Slumped or forward-positioned shoulder blades can alter arm movement initiation and muscle balance.
Weakness: Weakness in rotator cuff muscles can create imbalances and affect joint tracking.
Muscle Tension: Tension can restrict movement or weaken muscles, altering movement tracking.
Scapula Control/Posture: Proper shoulder blade support is crucial for initiating arm movement; poor control impacts tracking.

WAYS TO MANAGE

- Improve posture including shoulder blade, neck and trunk positioning
- Improve muscle balance - soft tissue release therapies such as massage, radial pressure wave therapy, dry needling, interferential, and supportive taping.
- Exercises focusing on posture and strengthening the rotator cuff
- Improve scapula control (exercises to build postural endurance and scapular stability)

Rehabilitation programs take time to build strength, but many people achieve immediate Improvement in symptoms by managing their specific contributing factors. Commitment to a comprehensive rehabilitation program working with a Physiotherapist returns most to full function.