

Shoulder Pain may not be a Shoulder Problem by Debra Pentz, DC

What if I told you most golf injuries are cleverly disguised? For example, most shoulder injuries are the result of the shoulder working too well. Yes, you read that correctly. Most of the time, the thoracic spine (the upper back) doesn't move or rotate around the spine as well as it should. When that happens, the shoulders overcompensate and over time are susceptible to overuse injury.

There are 2 common reasons for this shoulder overuse injuries.

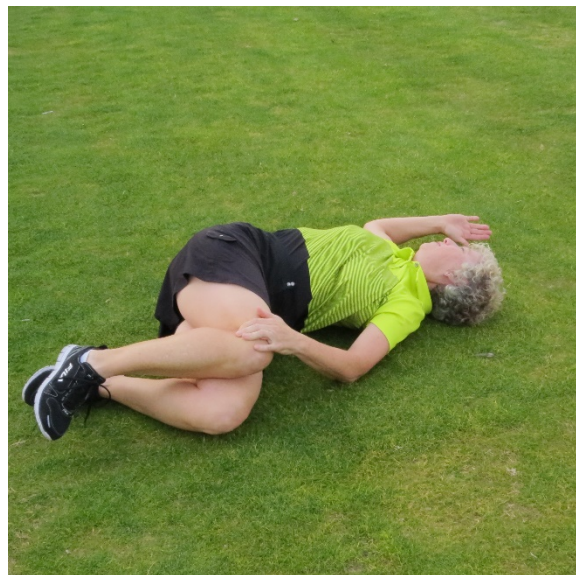
1. Lack of flexibility of the upper back, or poor upper back movement patterns.
2. Set up position. If you address the ball with your upper back rounded, it's very difficult to make a good upper back turn.

Let's talk about how to fix number 1.

First we need to diagnose whether we have the ability to turn. Instructions for the test - Lie on your side. Bend both knees. Take the downside hand and place it on the top knee – this keeps the knees stabilized. Bend the top arm so that the elbow is at chin height. Reach back with the elbow, rotating the upper back. The goal is to have both shoulders touch the ground. If both shoulders are not in contact with the floor, you have a flexibility problem.

The fix – Do the “test” movement daily until both shoulders touch the floor. Each stretch should be held 5 to 10 seconds. Repeat 5 to 10 times, depending how restricted you are.

If you pass the test, your problem is more likely to be a problem with your swing mechanics.



Shoulder turn in the golf swing by Peggy Briggs LPGA

I see golfers who have lots of arm swing but no turn in their swing. This robs us of some power and loss of power results in less distance.

Perhaps some of the problem is terminology. Golf instructors talk about a “shoulder” turn, so we think our shoulders should be doing a lot of work. A better que would be, turn the upper back – the shoulders are just along for the ride.

A great drill to get the feeling of what our shoulders, rather chest or upper back do is called arrows. It is simple to perform on the range when you are practicing or when you are warming up prior to your golf round. Take 2 of your golf clubs and hold the shaft under your right and left arm pits and holding them with your arms extended in your golf posture. Keep the shafts parallel to each other and turn away from your target. You should have the shafts keep pointing to the ground, then turn back to set up and turn forward to the target.



This movement does not require your shoulders to do anything. This drill is especially good for those golfers who lose their posture during the swing.....or you may hear lifted your head....check out our video on Smashing Golf You Tube Channel.

Bonus: Your golf ball may start to go straighter and farther with a good shoulder turn.