



**BODY IN
MOTION**

PHYSIO • REHAB • PILATES

"Keeping You Moving"

*Body In Motion's team of physiotherapists are here not only to help you back from injury, but also to help you reduce your risk of getting injured. As education is a key component of injury prevention, please read this month's look at **Shoulder Injuries**, and feel free to contact any one of the team to help reduce your risk!*

Shoulder Injuries

Commonly thought of as being a single joint, the shoulder girdle is actually much more complicated than many people are aware. A brief anatomy review reminds us that:

- It is made up of **three bones**: the upper arm or humerus, the shoulder blade or scapula and the collar bone or clavicle.
- These bones form **two true joints**: the acromio-clavicular (or AC) joint and the ball in socket gleno-humeral (GH or "true shoulder" joint). The whole shoulder girdle is connected to the rest of the skeleton at the front through the sterno-clavicular (or SC) joint. These three joints are supported and strengthened by ligaments and muscles.

With all of these bones and joints, the shoulder is responsible for more range of motion than any other joint in the body. This mobility, however, does come at the expense of stability. And as we saw with the lumbar spine last year, a lack of stability often means a risk of injury.

A common site for injury within the shoulder complex is the **rotator cuff** (or RC). A group of four muscles working together, the RC guides and stabilises the ball of the upper arm bone in the socket of the shoulder blade. These muscles' tendons can become irritated over a short or long period of time (called a tendinopathy) or they can be torn from a sudden overload.

Another site of injury is the **AC joint**, where ligaments attaching the collar bone to the shoulder blade are damaged. This is usually the result of a direct blow to the point of the shoulder, either from a fall or a tackle, and is commonly referred to as a **separated shoulder**.



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The true shoulder joint itself is also at risk. If the ball pops all the way out of the socket, it's called a **dislocation**. If it only slips out partially, it is called a **subluxation**. These injuries are often the result of trauma, but either can also happen innocuously. Regardless of the mechanism of injury, supporting structures (bones, cartilage, ligaments and tendons) are often loosened or damaged and should be looked after carefully.

Any of these injuries can be quite painful, and all are treated differently. For more information on preventing or managing shoulder injuries, please visit our website (www.bodyinmotionphysio.co.nz) or, better yet, call us on 07 927 3330 and we'll help you get going... better!

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