

# Sub-Acromial Pain Syndrome

(aka bursitis/impingement/rotator cuff)

In a nutshell...

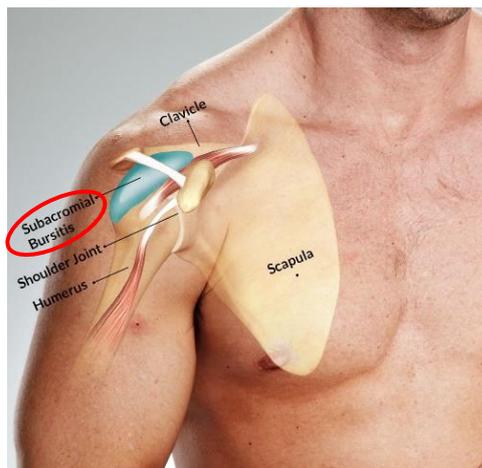


## What is it?

It refers to the pain on the shoulder tip, that occasionally radiates towards the top of the shoulder and down the arm on the outside of the arm. It is by far the most common shoulder complaint in the general population.

## Who gets it and how?

There are three basic changes to your shoulder which cause Sub-Acromial Pain Syndrome; excessive weakness, excessive stiffness and excessive mobility.



Typically there are two reasons for this shoulder pain to occur;

- Traumatic onset is less common, and occurs after a sudden unaccustomed load is taken by the arm.
- Gradual onset occurs with repetitive use, and may be caused by stiffness, weakness, or excessive mobility of the shoulder.

## How long will it take to go away?

With the correct management a person with Sub Acromial Pain Syndrome recovers well with the correct exercise management.

- The traumatic injury – Typically 6-12 weeks to recover
- The gradual onset – Typically between 3-6 months to recover

## What can I do about it?

1. Education – a patient who understands the underlying anatomy and pathology has a much greater chance of successfully managing Sub Acromial Pain Syndrome.
2. Avoid ongoing aggravation – by modifying activities pain can begin to improve, allowing improvements to occur with further exercise.
3. Graduated exercises – research indicates regular exercise is the best long term method of reducing pain in this condition.
4. Physiotherapist guided graduated re-introduction of movement and activity.
5. Don't get a steroid injection – recent research indicates your pain will come back again if you have a steroid injection vs a placebo injection.

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