

# OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE AND MUSCULO-SKELETAL PROBLEMS OF THE SHOULDER

The present article deal more particularly about the Rotator Cuff Tendinopathy; the disorder that affects mostly the joint of the shoulder.

This affection arises when a tendon of the shoulder was too much overused. When we often reproduce the same movements or when we force it in an inappropriate way, small wounds arise in tendons. These micro traumas will do some pain and also provoke a decrease of the elasticity in the tendons, because the repair fibers of collagen are not as good in quality as the original ones. Swimmers, baseball players are the persons most at risk of suffering because they are called to raise frequently the arm by exercising a strong pressure forwards.

**N.B:** Usually, this affection is more known under the name of tendinitis of the Rotator Cuff. Now, the suffix "itis" indicates the presence of inflammation. Because we know now that the majority of wounds in tendons do not come along with inflammation, we shall speak rather about tendinosis or tendinopathy; this last term concern all the wounds in tendons, thus tendinosis and tendinitis. The term tendinitis should be reserved for the rare cases of traumatism in the shoulder which provokes an inflammation of the tendon.

## Causes

- An overuse of the tendon by the frequent repetition of gesture made in an incorrect way.
- A too fast variation of the intensity of an effort for a badly prepared joint (lack of strength or stamina). Very often, we find a muscular imbalance between the muscles which "pull" the

shoulder forwards - which are generally strong-, and muscles behind - weaker. This imbalance brings the shoulder in an inadequate position and puts an additional stress on tendons, making them more fragile. The imbalance is often aggravated by bad postures.

## Symptoms

- A diffuse pain in the shoulder, which often radiates upward the arm. The pain is especially felt during the movements.
- Very often, the pain intensifies during night, sometimes to the point of provoking insomnia.
- A loss of the mobility in the shoulder.

## Persons at risk

- Patients who are called to raise frequently the arm by exercising certain strength forward: painters, swimmers, tennis players, baseball players, etc.
- Workers and athletes over 40 years. With age, the overuse and the decline of blood supply towards tendons increase the risk of tendinosis and its complications.

## Risk factors

- During sports activities :
  1. A non-existent or insufficient warm-up.
  2. A too intense or too frequent activity.
  3. A bad technique of playing (technopathy) with wrong sports gestures.
  4. A muscle structure insufficiently developed for the wanted effort.



## Treatment

**Osteopathic Manipulative Techniques:** Most of the time, a part of the problem is directly connected to the tendon of the shoulder, whereas the other big one is maintained by a disorder or dysfunction of cervical origin (in the region of the neck). Osteopathic Medicine is necessary. So, manipulations of cervical vertebrae and liberating the muscular tensions can get a relief of pains from the shoulder, because they correct a dysfunction which can contribute to the problem. Also an Osteopathic Manipulative Technique or treatment on the shoulder's structures itself will do lots of good to the patient shoulder by equilibrating the difference of tensions between the front muscles of the shoulders (strong ones) and the behind ones (weaker ones).

## Dr. Malek Tip

Tendinopathy of the shoulder is mostly connected to an intense physical activity above the capacity of tendons. This is why it is necessary to do strengthening exercises, even when symptoms of pain are treated. Otherwise, the problem will be chronic and will reproduce, because your tendons won't be as strong as they was at the time and before the wound.

If you feel a pain in the shoulder, no matter what the cause is, the biggest error, which you can commit, would be to immobilize it. If you are more than 35 years old and you keep your arm fixed along your body, even for a few days, you can develop easily Retractor capsulitis. This pathology is much more invalidating and takes lots of time to cure than tendinopathy.

### Elie MALEK MD, DOM

OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE  
Member of the French  
Professional Association For  
Osteopathic Physicians  
Member of the French Society  
for Orthopedic and  
Osteopathic Manual Medicine  
Member of the World  
Osteopathic Health  
Organization  
Training Monitor at the French  
Academy for Post-Graduate  
Training for  
Osteopathic Physicians - Paris

The therapist must be a Medical Doctor to remove any serious health problem, it is a MUST to eliminate any other medical reason and so, avoid any major complication or delay in the treatment. Therefore, it is especially recommended in Lebanon that the patient verifies at the LOP (Lebanese Order of Physicians) that the pretending therapist is a confirmed Medical doctor and this only for a unique purpose; their own health.