

Patience Can Thaw Frozen Shoulder Syndrome



Doctors estimate that 2% of the general population have a condition called adhesive capsulitis, also commonly referred to as frozen shoulder syndrome (FSS). Characterized during the onset of symptoms by night pain and reduced range of motion, usually in just one shoulder, FSS most often strikes people 40–60 years of age, with women being affected more often than men. Those with diabetes are also 10–29% more likely to develop FSS due to changes in tissues

resulting from high glucose levels.

While the causes of FSS remain unknown, doctors believe that recent injury, either major or minor, can trigger FSS. Other suggested triggers range from chronic diseases, like arthritis and diabetes, to thyroid problems, immobilization and Parkinson's disease. However, for most patients, the cause cannot be determined.

There are three stages of FSS:

Stage 1: The “freezing” stage lasts up to nine months and involves pain at night developing into more chronic pain and a diminishing range of motion.

Stage 2: The “frozen” stage lasts between four and 12 months; pain is reduced but range of motion remains limited.

Stage 3: During the “thawing” stage pain is minimal, and there is a marked improvement in range of motion lasting between five and 26 months.

Consistent effective treatment for FSS, like the cause of the condition, remains elusive and controversial. Since inflammation of the joint is believed to be involved in the early stages, many physicians recommend nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as ibuprofen or naproxen. In extreme cases, your physician may recommend corticosteroid injections or surgery.

However, **the most effective course of treatment seems to be a combination of physical therapy and NSAIDs** during the “thawing” stage to regain strength and mobility. But even with these treatment options, **patience may be the key** to dealing with FSS. Contact us for help in your recovery from this frustrating condition.