

A Comprehensive Guide on Shoulder Instability



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Shoulder instability is when the shoulder joint slips out of its place due to one or the other reason. This is the condition when the joint is too loose, and it can slide too much within its socket. Sometimes, people often misunderstand the condition with shoulder dislocation but both are different.

Shoulder dislocation is when the complete joint slips out of its position whereas, during instability, the joint becomes loose.

Shoulder instability can also be severe, and such cases may require surgery. During the surgery, orthopedic implants and instruments may also be required.

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Shoulder Instability – An Introduction

Shoulder instability is a situation where the person feels his/her shoulder joint is out of place. This is a condition that arises generally due to a sudden injury that may occur due to contact sports, automobile accidents, or a direct impact on the shoulder with a solid object.

One of the severe complications of shoulder instability is arthritis, and this occurs if chronic instability is not treated.

People experiencing shoulder instability may not be able to use the affected shoulder properly. Besides this, the pain will also be there.

Symptoms of Shoulder Instability

The symptoms experienced may vary according to the cause and severity of the condition. Below mentioned are the common symptoms associated with shoulder instability:

- ✓ A feeling of shoulder coming out of its place
- ✓ Pain in the shoulder that may come and go
- ✓ Numbness down the arm
- ✓ Difficulty in using the affected joint
- ✓ Pain while playing sports like throwing the ball or making overhead shoulder movement

Diagnosis of Shoulder Instability

It is important to correctly diagnose the condition and identify whether it is shoulder dislocation or instability as the condition may be misjudged if a proper diagnosis is not made.

Physical examination is always the first step during the diagnosis where the healthcare service provider will look for swelling, painful movements, restricted range of motion, and deformity, if there. The healthcare service provider will also ask about the symptoms experienced by the person along with the medical history. This will help the doctor identify the correct cause of the condition.

For confirmation, a few imaging tests like x-ray and MRI will be recommended.

Treatment of Shoulder Instability

The treatment often depends upon the severity of the condition and instability. Both non-surgical and surgical treatments are available for shoulder instability.

Non-surgical treatment

The doctor often tries to treat shoulder instability with a physical therapy program that is aimed at increasing the strength of the joint and improving flexibility. Medications are also prescribed to relieve painful symptoms and inflammation if there.

Surgery

Serious or chronic cases of shoulder instability may require surgery. Besides this, surgery is also recommended if non-surgical methods fail. The surgery aims at improving joint stability and repairing a fracture or damaged rotator cuff. Orthopedic implants may also be required during the surgery.

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