



NOTES

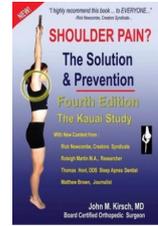
Shoulder Pain?

THE SOLUTION AND PREVENTION

BY JOHN M. KIRSCH, M.D

BOOKSTAND PUBLISHING © 2013

95 PAGES



KEY POINTS

Got SIS?

HANG!

When not to hang?

Had a dislocation!

Wolff's Law

You adapt to the loads you experience.

What is the CA arch?

Coracoid process+ coracoacromial ligament+ acromion!

Lost your shoulder function?

Hang!

What if I've completely torn my rotator cuff?

Hang

The Kauai Study

It's all about hanging!

"Everyone should do these exercises; because not only do the exercises relieve most shoulder pain problems, they prevent them from occurring. We humans, along with some of the great apes possess the unique ability to hang by our hands, or to 'brachiate.'" Like it or not, we humans, if healthy, and these great apes share nearly identical arm/shoulder anatomy and prehensile function."

John M. Kirsch from Shoulder Pain?

This book has one big key idea. If you have shoulder pain you need to hang. Of course you want to transition to full hanging wisely and there are a few cases in which people should not hang but in general that's the simple message of this book. If you want to have healthy shoulders you need to use your shoulders and hence you need to hang.

This is the second book I have read this month by a surgeon who is NOT recommending surgery. The first was Back In Control by David Hanscom M.D. Doctor Hanscom is a spinal surgeon who recommends a multifaceted approach to rid the body of pain and he only recommends surgery when a direct relationship can be seen between pathology and pain. Dr Hanscom found himself in chronic pain and his book takes us through the steps he used to rid himself of it. It's a great book and a must read if you are suffering. In this book John Kirsch M.D recommends the same set of steps he took to rid himself of shoulder pain and again despite being a surgeon he does not recommend surgery. Interesting!!!! This book is short and to the point and definitely worth a read if you have shoulders.

Got SIS, RC Injury or Frozen Shoulder?

YOU NEED TO HANG.

"The exercises described here are for those who want to maintain healthy shoulders, or for those who already have shoulder pain and who have been given a diagnosis of subacromial impingement syndrome (SIS), rotator cuff injury or frozen shoulder"

So here's the thing: Shoulders, like the rest of your body are designed to move! Many of us in western culture no longer move or use our bodies as they were designed to be. Our bodies adapt to not moving, which is not ideal.

"I was hiking in Peninsula Park in Door County, WI, with my two boys when we came upon a horizontal ladder. The boys climbed to the ladder and swung across like little monkeys. Then it was my turn. As I reached

for the second rung of the ladder, I realized I would never reach it; and I sensed immediately that the reason I could no “do” the ladder was because I had not been doing it. I was not hanging, or brachiating. If you want to be able to DO something, you must Do it.”

In a nut shell Dr. Kirsch started hanging after this incident and six months later was completely free of shoulder pain. Do you want to have pain free shoulders? Then start consistently hanging. Do you want to get better at a new language? Then practice. It’s all about taking action.

When Not To Hang!

“The hanging exercise is not recommended for persons with unstable or dislocating shoulders, for those in precarious physical health or with severe osteoporosis (fragile bones). If you have shoulder pain that goes unexplained for several weeks, it is wise to obtain a proper diagnosis from your physician.”

This is some very sound advice. It’s best to find out what’s happening in your shoulder before taking action. However if there has been no significant injury and you are only starting to notice a little pain, then that might be the perfect time to reverse the onset of chronic shoulder pain. Also if you have poor health or poor bone density make sure you get some expert advice to help you make the best decisions when it comes to your health. Of course what’s written here is not medical advice and should not be used as such.

Wolff’s Law

Wikipedia states that “Wolff’s law, developed by the German anatomist and surgeon Julius Wolff in the 19th century, states that bone in a healthy person or animal will adapt to the loads under which it is placed.”

Or as Kirsch says here

“A tree may be reshaped by bending or training its branches. The secret to the most common shoulder problem, the subacromial impingement syndrome (SIS), is that the contracted CA arch tissues can be stretched and reshaped.”

And indeed they can be reshaped via Wolff’s law.

The key idea to understand here is that the most shoulder problems are caused by tightness in the coracoacromial arch (which is the anatomy that sits above the humerus or upper arm bone). The ligament between the coracoid process and the acromion process seems to get tighter when the shoulder is not used regularly in its full range of movement. This tightness decreases the space available for the rotator cuff tendons. Approximately 95% of rotator cuff tears are caused by subacromial impingement syndrome.

The small amount of space for the rotator cuff tendons created by the decrease in space under the acromion leads to friction, wear and tear and eventually tears. Hence the main thing we want to do is increase the space under the acromion and this is where hanging comes in. Hanging will stretch the coricoacromial ligament and hence increase the space in which the rotator cuff tendons can move. We can change the shape of our bodies by changing the loads we require them to handle. As with all movement it is wise to take your time when introducing new movements to your body and to increase the load slowly. That's why supported hanging (with your feet still on the ground) should be practiced for a while before you try full hanging.

What is the CA arch?

"The CA arch is a curved structure in the shoulder that overlies the rotator cuff tendons and includes the corccoacromial ligament, the acromion, the coracoid process and other ligaments connecting the acromion and the coracoid process"

There you have it...the CA arch is the part of the body that hanging is going to help us stretch and hence increase the space underneath it.

"It is the contracture of the CA arch that is responsible for most of our troubles with our shoulders. It is the CA arch, if not stretched by overhead use of the arm including a hanging exercise, that will contract, pressing on the rotator cuff and producing irritation, inflammation, degeneration of the tendon, and pain"

Lost Your Shoulder Function?

"The daily life of modern man does not provide sufficient opportunity to properly stretch this important part of the shoulder, the CA arch. The hanging exercise, using the force of gravity, will provide the force and stretching that will reverse the process that led to the deformity and inertia of the CA arch. Hanging from an overhead support is an important normal human activity that modern man has neglected"

We need to use our bodies. Over the course of history humans have never been this sedentary and as a result we are suffering. Do you walk 10,000 steps a day? Do you carry something heavy most days? Do you sit on the floor and challenge your hip mobility or do you constantly sit in chair and drive everywhere?

If you have lost any movement function in your body, it's because you have not been doing that movement. The only way back to being able to do that movement is to make it a part of your daily movement habits. Get moving my friends and lets start with a little supported hanging eh?

What If I've Completely Torn My Rotator Cuff?

"I am now 74 Years old. Four years ago I was bowled over by two large dogs and suffered a complete tear of my rotator cuff. The supraspinatus tendon was completely torn and the muscle retracted. I could not lift my arm. But after some weeks I began the painful process of hanging from my overhead bar and trying to lift lightweights. This exercise was accompanied by painful crunching and grinding in the shoulder. This gradually strengthened my arm and after these four years of hanging and weight lifting I can now lift a 10-pound weight 150 times to a full overhead position each day. I have no pain in either shoulder."

This is just one doctor's opinion of what to do with a complete rotator cuff tear. In the quote above Kirsch is talking about himself. His supraspinatus muscle is completely severed at the tendon but as he says "I am able to use my injured shoulder just as if it had never been injured." That's a pretty good result by my standards but of course you will want to get some advice before you start hanging with any kind of shoulder injury.

The Kauai Study

*"The subjects in the study had the following diagnoses:
SIS (subacromial impingement syndrome): 70
RC (rotator cuff) tears with MRI diagnosis: 16
Adhesive capsulitis (Frozen shoulder): 4
Osteoarthritis of the glenohumeral (GH) joint with SIS: 2*

Of these 92 subjects, 90 were returned to comfortable ADL (activities of daily living) and remain so after variable years of follow up (1-28 years). Two subjects with "shoulder pain" had been scheduled to have shoulder replacement surgery and were able to cancel that surgery. Two subjects quit the study for personal reasons"

I have been a daily 'hanger' for a few years now. Katy Bowman in her great book 'Move you DNA' suggests that hanging provides vital loads the body requires for optimal function. If I wasn't already hanging daily I would definitely be incorporating it into my daily movement practice after reading the results of the Kauai study. If you are not already hanging, it's time to start. Find a tree branch, some monkey bars or set something up at home and increase your shoulder function by hanging!

About the Author of 'This Book'

John Kirsch

John M. Kirsch, M.D., an Orthopedic Surgeon who has practiced general orthopedic medicine and surgery in Wisconsin for 33 years. He has performed clinical research on shoulder function for 28 years and has given lectures on the subject to physical therapists, physicians and other healthcare providers. Check out his website www.kirschshoulder.com for more.

About the Author of this Move Note

Hazel Boot

Hazel has a degree in Exercise and Sports Science. She is also an Anatomy Trains Structural Integrator and a Restorative Exercise Specialist. She works with clients to improve movement and reduce pain. She loves reading and geeking out on movement books. She writes notes on the books she loves to help others learn faster.

Find out more at www.mindinmovement.co.nz

I hope you enjoyed the content of this note but please remember that it is not medical advice and should not be used as such.