

Healthy Shoulders Program

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Key Points for Athletes:

- Shoulder motion comes from the action of multiple joints, including your shoulder blade (also known as your scapula), your clavicle, and your thoracic spine (or upper back).
- Stability and strength of these joints come from the muscles of your back, neck, and shoulders.
- Explosive overhead striking strength comes from your legs and core muscles, being transferred through your shoulder joint to the ball.
- Maintaining good shoulder mechanics protects your rotator cuff muscles, and prevents the most common shoulder injuries.
- “Balancing” your shoulder muscles consists of stretching tight muscles (that get tight from daily poor posture, excessive sitting, imbalanced strengthening, and gravity), as well as strengthening the most beneficial muscles that maintain good posture and allow full shoulder motion with great stability.
- Balanced muscles provide better mobility, extended overhead reach, improved performance consistency, decreased pain, and better transfer of power through your shoulders to the ball.
- The most common tight muscles are the chest muscles (pectoralis major and minor) and the scapular depressors and downward rotators (latissimus dorsi and others).
- The most common weak muscles are the scapular upward rotators (middle and lower trapezius, serratus anterior).
- GOOD POSTURE throughout the day is important and consists of holding your shoulders BACK and UP, with your chin pulled in like you’re making a double chin. Ears, shoulders, and hips should all line up in a vertical line.

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