

SHOULDER PAIN SOLVED

A 5-STEP GUIDE TO FINDING AND FIXING THE ROOT CAUSE

A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO RESTORING
COMFORT, BUILDING STRENGTH, AND
MOVING PAIN-FREE AGAIN



DR. PADEN WOLFE

INTRODUCTION

Shoulder Pain Doesn't Have to Be Permanent

Whether it's a dull ache, a sharp pinch when reaching overhead, or stiffness that limits your movement, **shoulder pain can be incredibly frustrating**. It's one of the most common issues we see—and one of the most disruptive.

Everyday tasks like putting on a shirt, reaching behind your back, lifting groceries, or even sleeping comfortably can become a challenge. And while many people turn to rest, ice, or pain medication, those approaches often only manage symptoms—they don't fix the real problem.

The truth is, **most shoulder pain is mechanical**. That means it's the result of how you're moving—or not moving. Things like poor posture, weakness in stabilizing muscles, and repetitive stress from daily habits can gradually wear down the joint, leading to pain and dysfunction.

The good news? With the right movement strategy, you can begin to restore function, relieve discomfort, and finally address the root cause of your shoulder pain.

This guide will walk you through **five simple steps** that are proven to improve shoulder mechanics, strengthen key muscles, and support pain-free movement throughout your day.

ABOUT MILE HIGH PHYSICAL THERAPY

Mile High Physical Therapy: Helping You Find Lasting Shoulder Pain Relief

Located in the heart of Denver, CO, Mile High Physical Therapy is dedicated to helping people reduce pain, restore posture, and regain confidence in their movement—without relying on medications, injections, or surgery.

Neck pain can be incredibly disruptive. Whether it's tension from long hours at a desk, stiffness while driving, or discomfort that radiates into the shoulders and upper back—it can interfere with everything from your focus to your sleep. **And when stretching and rest stop working, it's time for a deeper solution.**

That's why we take a comprehensive, hands-on approach that focuses on your whole body—not just the symptoms. Through postural corrections, manual therapy, and targeted exercise, we help you address the root cause of neck pain and keep it from coming back.



www.milehighphysicaltherapy.com

ABOUT DR. PADEN WOLFE

Meet Dr. Paden Wolfe: 30+ Years of Experience in providing Sciatica Relief

With over three decades of experience, Dr. Paden Wolfe, MSPT, DPT, has helped thousands of patients overcome chronic shoulder pain, tension, and movement dysfunction.



His expertise in posture, spinal mechanics, and neuromuscular control allows him to create personalized, highly effective plans for long-term relief.

His approach often includes:

- Postural training and ergonomic education to reduce daily strain
- Manual therapy techniques to improve shoulder mobility and reduce muscle tension
- Dry needling for targeted relief of deep muscle tightness
- Movement-based rehab and custom home programs to restore strength and function

If you've tried stretches or pain relief techniques with little success, **Dr. Wolfe's research-backed, whole-body approach** may be the missing link. His goal is to help you feel better, move better, and live free from shoulder pain—for good.

WHY SHOULDER PAIN KEEPS COMING BACK—AND HOW TO FIX IT FOR GOOD

You've tried stretching, icing, resting—even a few YouTube exercises. But the shoulder pain still lingers. Sound familiar?

You're not alone. The most common frustration we hear is that shoulder pain keeps coming back—or never fully goes away. That's because most people treat the symptoms, not the source.

Here's the truth: **shoulder pain is rarely just about the shoulder.**

Shoulder pain is often caused by poor posture, muscle imbalances, or faulty movement habits—things like prolonged sitting, lifting with bad form, or neglecting key stabilizing muscles. Ice and rest might help temporarily, but they don't fix the root cause.

The good news? You can.

By improving shoulder mechanics, building strength in the right areas, and moving more intentionally, you can relieve pain and keep it from returning.

In the next section, we'll walk you through **five simple steps** to get started—based on the same approach we use in our clinic every day. Let's begin.

STEP 1: POSTURAL CORRECTIONS – RESET THE FOUNDATION

Your posture sets the stage for how your shoulder moves. If you spend much of your day hunched forward—whether at a computer, driving, or on your phone—your shoulder blades are likely sitting too far forward, limiting space in the joint and putting you at risk for impingement.

Why It Helps:

- Reduces pressure and irritation in the shoulder joint
- Restores proper alignment between the shoulder and spine
- Sets up your body for better mechanics with every movement

Try This:

- Sit or stand tall, with your head stacked over your shoulders.
- Gently draw your shoulder blades back and down—don't shrug.
- Keep your ribcage relaxed and avoid over-arching your back.
- Hold this posture for 30–60 seconds and repeat several times daily.

Awareness is key. Improving posture throughout the day is one of the fastest ways to reduce strain on the shoulder.



STEP 2: STRENGTHEN THE MIDDLE & LOWER TRAPEZIUS MUSCLES

The middle and lower trapezius muscles play a critical role in stabilizing the shoulder blades, allowing the arm to move smoothly and efficiently. When these muscles are weak, the upper traps tend to take over, pulling the shoulder out of optimal alignment.

Why It Helps:

- Improves scapular control (how your shoulder blade moves)
- Reduces overuse of the neck and upper traps
- Supports overhead and reaching movements

Try This:

- Lie face down on a mat or bench.
- Reach your arms out to the sides to form a “T.”
- Slowly raise your arms while squeezing your shoulder blades together.
- Repeat 10–12 reps, holding each for 3–5 seconds.
- Progress to a “Y” or “W” position to engage different fibers.

Prone arm raises “T”



Prone arm raises “Y”



Do this 3–4x/week to begin improving control and support around your shoulder blades.

STEP 3: AVOID PAINFUL SHOULDER POSITIONS (IMPINGEMENT AWARENESS)

Shoulder impingement often occurs when the rotator cuff tendons get compressed in a narrow space during movement—especially when lifting the arm overhead with poor mechanics. One of the most overlooked steps in shoulder rehab is learning which positions to avoid as you recover.

Why It Helps:

- Prevents aggravation of irritated tissues
- Promotes healing while maintaining function
- Encourages smarter, more pain-free movement

Common Positions to Modify or Avoid:

- Reaching overhead with poor posture
- Internal rotation combined with elevation (like putting on a jacket or seatbelt)
- Pushing movements without scapular control

Instead of forcing movements through pain, learn to modify your daily activities to stay within a pain-free range as you rebuild strength and control.

STEP 4: STRENGTHEN THE ROTATOR CUFF FOR STABILITY

The rotator cuff consists of four small muscles that stabilize your shoulder joint with every movement. When weak or imbalanced, these muscles can't keep the joint centered, leading to irritation, instability, and pain.

Why It Helps:

- Improves joint control and reduces wear-and-tear
- Supports lifting, reaching, and carrying tasks
- Helps prevent recurring shoulder injuries

Try This:

- Stand or lie on your side with a light resistance band.
- Keep your elbow at your side, bent at 90 degrees.
- Slowly rotate your forearm outward, keeping your elbow tucked.
- Control the movement as you return to the start.
- Perform 2–3 sets of 10–15 reps.



Progress gradually with resistance. Focus on quality of movement rather than speed or weight.

STEP 5: INTEGRATE FUNCTIONAL SHOULDER MOVEMENTS

The shoulder isn't designed to work in isolation. It's meant to function as part of the whole—coordinating with the spine, scapula, and core during real-life movement. That's why it's critical to include functional patterns that mimic the way you move every day.

Why It Helps:

- Reinforces proper movement patterns
- Builds usable strength for daily life
- Reduces compensation and overuse injuries

Examples of Functional Movements to Practice:

- Controlled wall slides
- Diagonal reaches (like putting on a seatbelt)
- Light resisted overhead presses (once pain-free)
- Reaching and lifting tasks with focus on form

Start slow and use light resistance or body weight. Functional control is the **final step** in restoring lasting shoulder health.

Controlled wall slides



Diagonal reaches (like putting on a seatbelt)



Light resisted overhead presses (once pain-free)



Reaching and lifting tasks with focus on form



FINAL THOUGHTS: REAL RELIEF COMES FROM SMARTER MOVEMENT

Shoulder pain can be frustrating—especially when it keeps coming back without a clear cause. But here's the good news: you're not broken, and you're not stuck.

Most shoulder pain isn't from a major injury—it's from how you move every day. Poor posture, weak stabilizers, and repetitive stress gradually overload the joint. That's why short-term fixes like ice or rest rarely lead to lasting relief.

Real improvement comes from retraining how your shoulder moves.

By strengthening the right muscles, improving joint control, and making small adjustments to posture and movement, you can relieve pain and prevent it from returning.

The five steps in this guide are simple but powerful. You don't need to do more—you just need to do the right things, consistently.

So take it slow. Stay consistent. And give your shoulder the support it needs to move well and feel better.

You've already taken the first step—now stay consistent and build on it. You've got this.

READY FOR MORE SUPPORT?

If your shoulder pain hasn't improved—or keeps coming back—Mile High Physical Therapy is here to help.

Lingering pain often points to deeper movement issues like poor shoulder stability, posture imbalances, or compensation patterns. That's why we take a whole-body approach—not just treating where it hurts, but identifying the root cause.

Lasting relief comes from precision, not guesswork—and we're here to guide you every step of the way.

What to Expect from Your Free Discovery Visit:

- A one-on-one evaluation with a Doctor of Physical Therapy
- A detailed look at your posture, shoulder mechanics, and movement patterns
- Clear feedback on what's working, what's not, and what needs to change
- A personalized game plan to reduce pain, restore strength, and prevent setbacks

Whether your shoulder pain is recent or long-standing, we'll help you understand why it's happening—and what to do next to fix it for good.

👉 **[Click here to schedule your FREE Discovery Visit](#)**

You don't have to navigate this on your own. Let's solve your shoulder pain—together.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Shoulder pain doesn't have to be something you just deal with. With the right postural adjustments, focused strengthening, and movement retraining, you can reduce irritation, restore function, and get back to using your arm with confidence. Start with the five simple steps in this guide—and if you're ready for more support, we're here to help.

Take the First Step Toward Lasting Shoulder Pain Relief



Don't let shoulder pain, stiffness, or limited movement keep you from doing what you love. Whether it's reaching overhead, carrying groceries, or sleeping without discomfort, the key to real relief is understanding what's driving the pain—and fixing it at its source.

BOOK A FREE DISCOVERY VISIT TODAY!

<https://www.milehighphysicaltherapy.com/discovery-visit/>

We're here to support you beyond this guide. Reach out anytime for expert assessment, targeted shoulder care, and one-on-one guidance. Let's get you back to moving, lifting, and living—without pain slowing you down.



info@milehighphysicaltherapy.com

www.milehighphysicaltherapy.com