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Shoulder Osteoarthritis

Shoulder osteoarthritis refers to inflammation of the shoulder joint with degeneration of the cartilage, or smooth surface of the joint. Normal cartilage allows for nearly frictionless motion to occur throughout daily activities. As this deteriorates, there is increased friction from defects in the cartilage and secondary bone spurs may develop. Pain and stiffness will result leading to disability and loss of function of the shoulder joint.

As with most inflammatory conditions, treatment is focused at first decreasing the amount of inflammation. This can be performed with appropriately prescribed anti-inflammatory medication or ice to the area four times daily for 20 minutes. You and your surgeon may consider an injection with a steroid such as cortisone. Despite treating the inflammation, osteoarthritis cannot be reversed. Treatment is directed at treating the symptoms to decrease pain and maintain function. This can be further accomplished with specific stretching and strengthening exercises, as well as modifying any provocative activities.

We have assembled a series of stretches and strengthening exercises which have proven clinical benefits in treating shoulder osteoarthritis. Please visit our Physical Therapy tab at our website www.floridajointcare.com to view our instructional videos created by our surgeons and therapists to correctly perform these stretches and exercises at home.

Home Exercise Program

1. Active resisted internal rotation – perform 20 repetitions, perform twice daily
 2. Active resisted external rotation – perform 20 repetitions, perform twice daily
 3. Active resisted extension – perform 20 repetitions, perform twice daily
 4. Active shoulder retraction – perform 10 repetitions, perform twice daily
 5. Shoulder abduction exercises – perform 10 repetitions, perform twice daily
- * May adjust number of repetitions and number of sets as tolerated. May reduce range of motion for each exercise until motion improves.

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