

**Argus  
Orthopaedic  
Zone**

**If Your Shoulder Still Hurts**

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As you begin to read these Argus Orthopaedic Zone articles (every week I hope!), I would like there to be some continuity. You will learn much more about Orthopaedic and musculoskeletal problems if I cover a topic in some depth. You will get more out of it that way and I think it will be more interesting week to week. I'll try to let you know each time what is coming up next week. There is so much to learn - but I plan to be doing this for a long time so here we go!

Last week I tried to give you an overview of shoulder problems as I see them in the office. The most common are muscle strain, inflammation (tendinitis and bursitis), and impingement.

Well, if the shoulder doesn't respond to treatment or gets worse, then what?

You could have a stubborn strain or inflammation - or maybe something worse.

At the office I would have taken a history, examined you and taken a plain x-ray. An accurate diagnosis is the best way to start treatment, because treatment can be ineffective or possibly harmful without correct diagnosis.

If your shoulder is continuing to be a problem, I might decide you need a special x-ray study such as an MRI or arthrogram (dye injection study with plain x-rays) to help me make the correct diagnosis.

An MRI study ordinarily does not involve an injection. In some cases it may, but usually not.

These studies help determine if the person has a partial or complete tear of the rotator cuff (among other conditions), which is a more serious problem.

The shoulder may have also lost motion and become stiff and the patient hardly realizes it because they are not using the shoulder and

were protecting it. This is sometimes called a frozen shoulder (which by the way is not cool to have!).

Gee, I think we are out of time and I have hardly gotten started. Please come back next week as I continue with the shoulder.

On a personal note, I want all of you to know that every word you read was written by me for these Argus articles and based on my training and experience. Same goes for all the information on my teaching website [www.orthopodsurgeon.com](http://www.orthopodsurgeon.com).

Our office and practice goal is simple - To help people return to more pain free functional lives.

Be well.

Dr. Haverbush