



Part 2

Ouch! Why Do I Have Shoulder Pain After Training with Weights?

—Fred Stellabotte and Rachel Straub, MS, CSCS

Working with weights can be the most beneficial thing you do for your body, or detrimental if you practice incorrectly. The exercise will never hurt you—it is improper form that will injure you.

I experience shoulder pain when using weights. What am I doing wrong?

Any upper-body exercise, if performed improperly, will exacerbate shoulder troubles. Here are common examples (and recommended solutions):

Bench Press

- Moving your elbows past shoulder level (or allowing your elbows to flare out) increases the chance of shoulder injury.
- To avoid injury, keep your elbows below shoulder height and keep your elbows close to your body.

Chest Fly

- Straightening your elbows, permitting too deep a motion, or simply using an incorrect hand orientation (such as a palm-down grip) can precipitate problems.
- To avoid shoulder injury, maintain a slight bend in your elbows, don't allow your elbows to move far past your shoulders, and use a neutral handgrip (i.e., palms facing inward).

Biceps Curl

- Moving the weight using your shoulders can cause injury.
- To avoid shoulder injury, your elbows should only pivot.

Triceps Extension

- Flaring your elbows out (a common consequence of improper hand positioning) increases the risk of injury.
- To avoid shoulder injury, use the hand position that keeps your elbows close to your body (i.e., palm-down or palm-up).

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Weight Training Without Injury: Over 350 Step-By-Step Pictures Including What Not to Do!

Reverse Fly and Row

- Maintaining your elbows near shoulder height can lead to shoulder impingement.
- To avoid shoulder injury, keep your elbows below shoulder level.

Lat Pulldown and Shoulder Press

- Positioning the weight behind your head (or allowing your elbows to move behind your shoulders) can cause irreparable damage to your rotator cuff.
- To avoid shoulder injury, keep the weight (and your elbows) in front of your shoulders.

Shoulder Raise

- Keeping your elbows straight, your palms or thumbs down, or lifting the weight directly to your side can precipitate problems.
- To avoid shoulder injury, maintain a slight bend in your elbows, keep your thumbs on top, and keep your elbows in front of your shoulders.

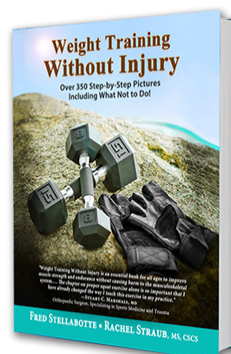
This is the 2nd article in the 4-part series,
**“Ouch! Why Do I Have Knee, Low Back, Shoulder, and Neck Pain
After Training with Weights?”**

Stay tuned for Part 3:
“Ouch! Why Do I Have Neck Pain After Training with Weights?”

Below is the link to the 1st article.

[Part 1: Ouch! Why Do I Have Knee Pain After Training with Weights?](#)

For details on structuring a weight-training program (and much more), please refer to ***Weight Training Without Injury: Over 350 Step-by-Step Pictures Including What Not to Do!***, a full-color manual that illustrates incorrect vs. correct technique for trainers, professionals, intermediates, and novices by Fred Stellabotte and Rachel Straub, MS, CSCS.



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