

Tips to help you shoulder the transition back to work.



New York Life Group Benefit Solutions knows that returning to work after a shoulder injury can be stressful. If you're feeling anxious about returning to your regular work activities, please use the information below to learn more about shoulder injuries, tips to stay healthy, and do's and don'ts to help care for your shoulder.

The range of shoulder issues.

- › Because the shoulder joint has the greatest range of motion of any joint in the body, it is a common source of injury and overuse.
- › Though shoulder problems can develop from everyday wear and tear, overuse, or an injury, people are more vulnerable to injuries as they age.
- › Frozen shoulder can develop when you stop using the joint normally because of pain, injury, a chronic health condition, or surgery. Any shoulder problem can lead to frozen shoulder if you don't work to keep full range of motion.

Stay strong. Stay healthy.

Shoulder problems can be minor or serious. Injuries most commonly occur during sports activities, work-related tasks, projects around the home, or falls. Overuse injuries occur when too much stress is placed on a joint or other tissue, often by overdoing an activity or through repetition of an activity.

Reduce your risk of repeated or worsening shoulder problems with a few simple steps:

- › Use proper body mechanics and range of motion to prevent shoulder problems. When your body is properly aligned, your joints and muscles can share the load of your body weight. That way, a single joint or muscle isn't taking on more weight than it should.
- › Gentle, progressive range-of-motion exercises, stretching, and using your shoulder more may help prevent frozen shoulder after surgery or an injury. Strengthening your wrist, arm, neck, and back muscles help protect and decrease stress on your shoulder.

The do's and don'ts of shoulder care.

No matter what type of work you do, here are some basic tips for caring for your shoulders on the job.

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Maintain good posture. Stand and sit straight and relaxed, without slumping.› Warm up well and stretch before any activity.› Use the correct body movements or positions during activities, such as lifting, so that you do not strain your shoulder.› Use a step stool to reach objects overhead.› Take frequent breaks when performing tasks that require reaching out or overhead.› When carrying objects, keep the item close to your body.› Consider alternating arms when reaching.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Don't cradle a phone between your shoulder and head.› Don't lift or carry objects that are too heavy for you.› Avoid catching falling objects.› Avoid overusing your arm or doing repeated movements.› Avoid keeping your arms out to the side or raised overhead for long periods of time, such as when painting a ceiling.

Ask for help.

It's not always easy to ask someone for help. But in your case, with a shoulder injury, asking for assistance can help you recover faster and prevent another injury.

If you need help lifting something, ask a coworker to lend a hand. And, if you need to make changes to your job to avoid hurting your shoulder again, work with your doctor and your manager to see what options are available to you.

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