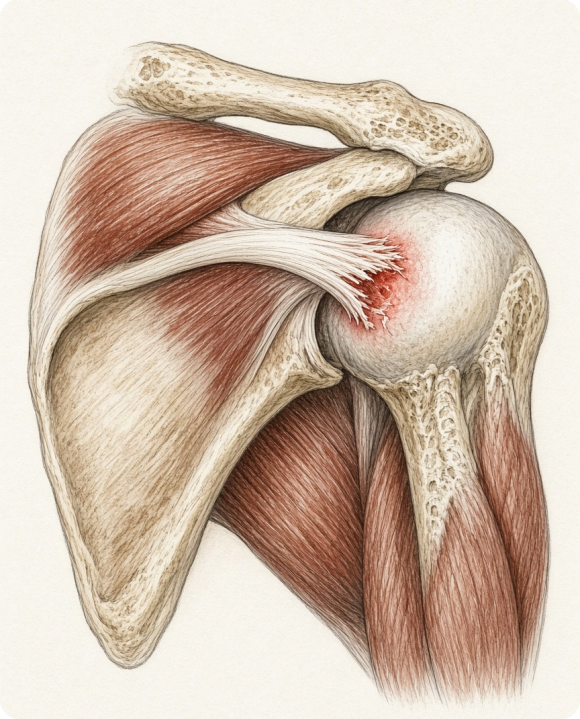
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PATIENT GUIDE

Supraspinatus Tear

Sharp shoulder pain when lifting your arm? It could be a **supraspinatus tear.**

Armin Ghayyur
Physiotherapist · arminphysio.com

What is the supraspinatus?

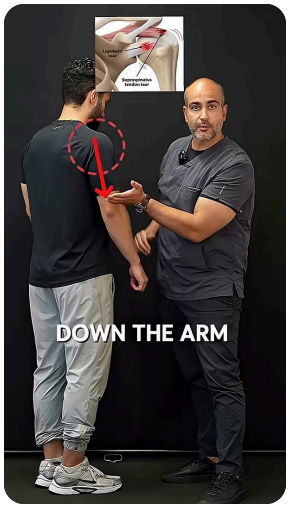
The supraspinatus is one of the four rotator cuff muscles. It helps lift your arm and keeps your shoulder stable. In many rotator cuff injuries, progressive rotator cuff and shoulder strengthening can help improve strength, function and pain.

QUICK CHECK

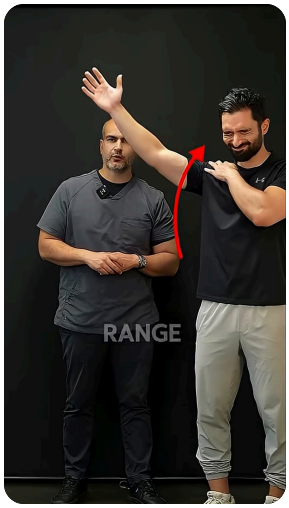
Does this sound like you?

- [ ] Pain **in this region**, going down the arm but **not past your elbow**
- [ ] Pain when you **bring your arm up with your thumb pointing down**
- [ ] Pain only in a **specific range** when you bring your arm up
- [ ] Pain when **resisting** this motion, arms out with thumbs down
- [ ] Pain when **lying on the affected shoulder**

If you ticked a few boxes, your rotator cuff could be part of the problem. Try the 3 exercises on the next pages.



Pain in the shoulder, not past the elbow



Pain in a specific range lifting the arm

YOUR 3 EXERCISES

Try these exercises

1 Band pull-apart raise

Activates all the muscles around the shoulder





1. Hold on to a band like so.
2. **Pull the band apart** as you're bringing your arms up, activating all the muscles around the shoulder.
3. **Come right back down.** Don't go to pain, and repeat.

3 sets of 10–15 reps, slow and controlled

From Armin's video description

Stop if you feel sharp pain that doesn't settle, or numbness or tingling down your arm.

2 Band wall slide

Activates the muscles around your shoulder





1. **Hold the band apart** like so.
2. Keep your **forearms parallel** with one another.
3. **Gently bring your arms up**, going up the wall, activating all these muscles.
4. **Come back down** and repeat.

3 sets of 10–15 reps, slow and controlled

From Armin's video description

Stop if you feel sharp pain that doesn't settle, or numbness or tingling down your arm.

3 Band raise, thumb down

Strengthens the supraspinatus at a 45-degree angle



1. Hold on to a band like so with your **thumb pointing down**, at a **45-degree angle**.
2. **Bring the arm up** all the way, activating these muscles.
3. Again, **don’t go to pain**.
4. **Slowly come back down** and repeat.

3 sets of 10–15 reps, slow and controlled

From Armin’s video description

Stop if you feel sharp pain that doesn’t settle, or numbness or tingling down your arm.

DAILY ROUTINE · ABOUT 10–15 MINUTES

Put it together

01
Activate
Band pull-apart raise, 3 sets of 10–15

02
Activate
Band wall slide, 3 sets of 10–15

03
Strengthen
Band raise, thumb down, 3 sets of 10–15

Sets and reps are from Armin's video description; doing it once a day is a suggestion. Don't go to pain: move slowly and with control.

Stop the exercise if you notice

- Sharp, pinching pain that gets worse as you go
- Pain that lingers or is worse the next day
- Numbness, tingling or weakness in your arm

If an exercise keeps causing these, stop it and get assessed.

SAFETY FIRST

Get checked right away if you have

- Shoulder pain after a **fall or accident**, especially if the shoulder **looks out of place**
- **Chest pain, shortness of breath**, sweating, or pain spreading to your **jaw or arm**
- Suddenly **can't lift your arm** at all, or major weakness that came on quickly
- A shoulder that is **hot, red and swollen**, or shoulder pain with a **fever**
- **Numbness, tingling or weakness** spreading down your arm
- **Constant pain at night** that doesn't ease with rest, or **unexplained weight loss**

Call 911 for chest pain or trouble breathing. For the others, see a doctor right away or go to the nearest emergency department. If your shoulder isn't improving after a few weeks, **book an assessment**.

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Scan for @arminphysio

NEED MORE HELP?

Book an assessment with Armin

In clinic or virtually. See current options and times at the link.

Scan to book

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Disclaimer: This handout is for education only. It is not a diagnosis or medical advice and does not replace an assessment by a qualified health professional. If you're unsure whether these exercises are right for you, check with your physiotherapist or doctor first.

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