FROZEN SHOULDER (ADHESIVE CAPSULITIS)

What is wrong with my shoulder?

A normal healthy shoulder has a wide range of unrestricted motion. Three bones make up the shoulder: the scapula (shoulder blade), the humerus (upper arm bone), and the clavicle (collarbone). The shoulder joint is surrounded by a capsule which contains joint fluid that lubricates the shoulder joint.

Frozen shoulder causes scar tissue to form around the joint. This formation of scar tissue results in restricted motion and stiffness. Frozen shoulder goes through several stages and may take up to 18 months to resolve.

What causes frozen shoulder?

Generally, the cause of frozen shoulder is unknown. The condition is more common in diabetics. Women are more likely to develop frozen shoulder than men. Frozen shoulder may occur after an injury to your shoulder.

How is frozen shoulder diagnosed?

Frozen shoulder is usually diagnosed on physical examination. Patients with frozen shoulder usually complain of pain with shoulder motion and stiffness. Shoulder arthritis can also cause pain with motion and stiffness. Shoulder arthritis is ruled out with normal x-rays.

How is frozen shoulder treated?

Treatment of frozen shoulder initially starts with physical therapy, nsaid's, and cortisone injections. Nsaid's include ibuprofen or prescription anti-inflammatories. Cortisone is a strong steroidal anti-inflammatory. Physical therapy is essential to regain your shoulder range of motion. Treatment can be a very long process and may take up to 18 months to regain your motion and resolve your pain.

What happens when I need surgery?

When non-operative treatment fails, you may elect to have arthroscopic shoulder surgery. Surgery consists of releasing the scar tissue surrounding the shoulder joint through tiny incisions. This is called a capsular release. The surgeon will also manipulate your shoulder by slowiy moving your shoulder while under

anesthesia. A capsular release and manipulation is usually done together to help regain your shoulder motion. Physical therapy is essential after surgery.