

## **BROADCAST-The mystery and misery of frozen shoulder** ***Don't tough it out; treatment can speed recovery***

We had the first frost this week, but that has nothing to do with why some people are showing up to their doctor, complaining their shoulder seems frozen – as in, they can't move it.

Robert Leb, MD, an orthopedic specialist who sees patients at OSF HealthCare, says a condition called frozen shoulder occurs in about 2% to 5% of the population. It's more common among women than men and occurs most often between the ages of 40 and 60 years.

Dr. Leb says frozen shoulder can develop over time but can also come on without warning. He says people come to him reporting they were fine one day and then they lost range of motion in their shoulders.

**“Lots of people tell me they felt like they slept on their shoulder wrong and then a few days later they're like, ‘I can't move it. I'm stuck.’ And then they come in to see us.” (:12)**

Dr. Leb says it's still a mystery why people get frozen shoulder, but there's a strong connection to inflammation, which makes people more susceptible if they have certain conditions.

**“So if you have diabetes, either Type 1 or Type 2, you're at risk for frozen shoulder. If you have a history of cancer; cancer patients tend to develop inflammation, so patients who have had cancer are at higher risk for frozen shoulder.” (:17)**

Over the counter anti-inflammatory medicine such as Aleve, Tylenol or Motrin can help but sometimes more intervention is needed.

**“The mother of all anti-inflammatory drugs are steroids, and I can either give that to you by mouth, so you can take pills, or I can actually inject it right into the shoulder and zap the inflammation that way.” (:15)**

Physical therapy can also help loosen the “frozen” connective tissue.

**“The body shrinks it down, and then little by little, with the assistance of a qualified physical therapist or occupational therapist, you stretch that shoulder out and regain that motion.” (:13)**

Dr. Leb says in a small number of cases, arthroscopic surgery might be needed to loosen the joint capsule.

**“(That's) where I put a little lighted telescope into the shoulder and I can actually use electrocautery and actually cut the tissues that are so scarred in and open the shoulder that way. Or, in rare cases, I'll even make an incision and go down into the shoulder capsule and very carefully release it.” (:19)**

Dr. Leb says seek treatment at the first sign something is not right. Help is available and most patients recover without needing surgery.