

# Put Your **SHOULDER** Into It!

Wellness for Musicians Series, Article 2

by Jackie Lewis, LMT, NCTMB, CCA, RYT



## Do you have “the weight of the world on your shoulders”?

If you’re experiencing shoulder pain on a regular basis, you might need to start implementing a self care routine!

Once you have eliminated two possibilities - **1. Poor Posture While Playing** and **2. Underlying Serious Medical Issue** (by consulting your healthcare professional) - you can proceed to the myriad of possibilities for self care available to you. Please reference my article in The Celt issue one, **“Pain in the Neck”**, for a short description of the non-drug/non-traditional modalities available to you such as Rolfing,

Acupuncture, Chiropractic, Massage, etc.

“Shoulder” is a pretty broad term for the area housing a synovial (ball and socket) joint that enables us to have the extreme range of motion sometimes required to function as a human being. Because of the glenohumeral (shoulder) joint’s range of motion, there is a delicate, balanced web of musculature, connective tissue, bones, nerves, and blood vessels to control the arm and hand movement. If one thing goes out of balance, the structure ceases to function optimally and dysfunction occurs - usually in the form of some kind of pain. So what to do?

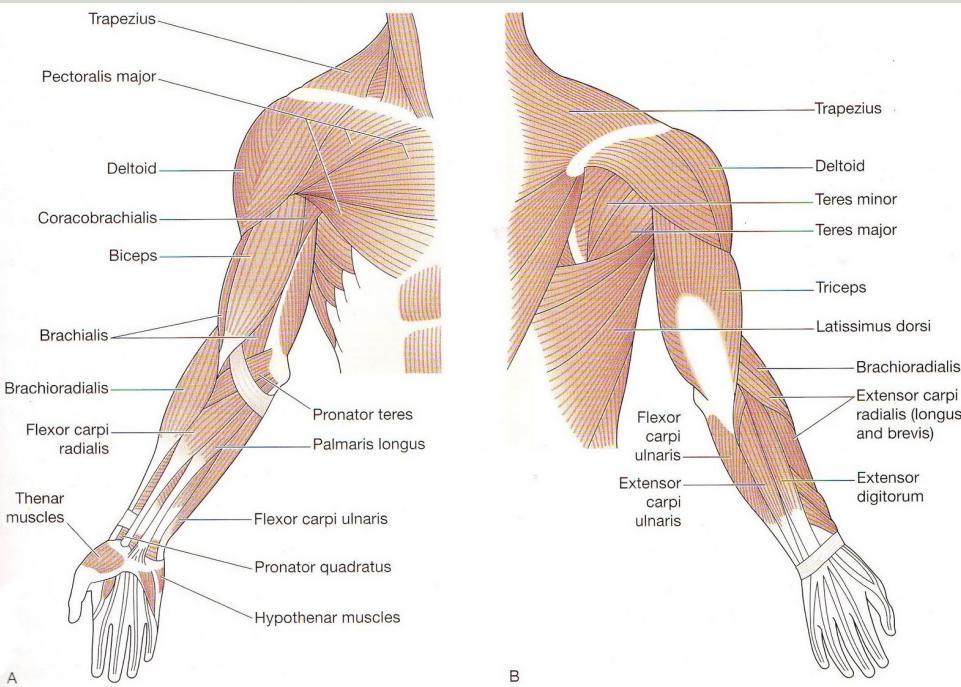


Kinesio Tape Application for Shoulder Pain



Shoulder Stretch #1: Across the body

# THE SHOULDER

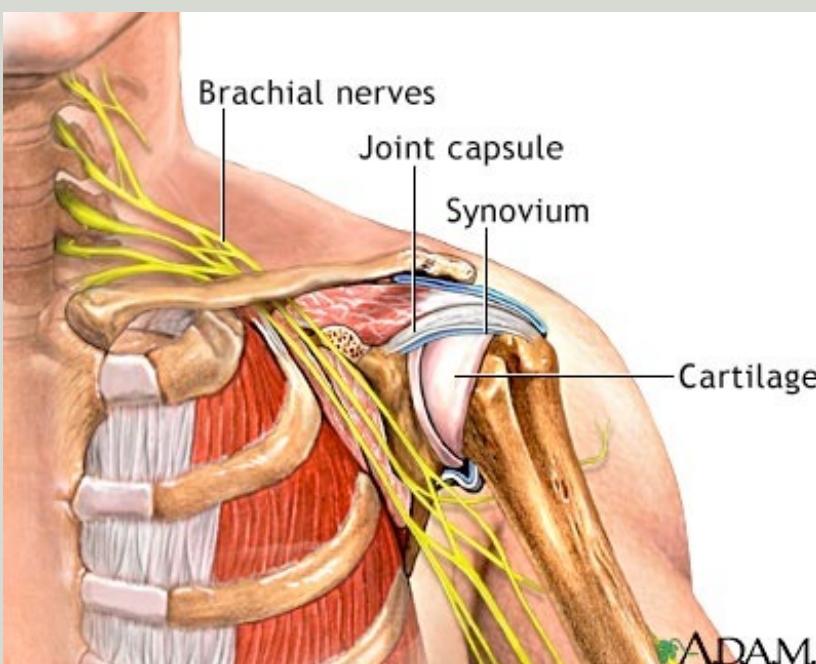


The main muscles of the shoulder and upper limb. A: anterior view. B: posterior view.

**If any pain is sharp or stabbing, and/or you feel tingling or numbness in the shoulder, arm, or hand, consult your healthcare professional!** This can be a sign of a few more serious issues, like an impingement of the nerves or blood vessels, particularly at the clavicle (collarbone), frozen shoulder, torn

or injured rotator cuff muscles, bursitis (inflammation of the bursae), tendonitis, or any other number of wonderful pathologies.

You can utilize any of the alternative modalities for the shoulder; massage is popular, as is yoga, acupuncture, Rolfing, Feldenkrais or the application of kinesiology tape.



## Suggested modalities...

Page 1 - Kinesio Tape

Page 2 -

Top: Massage

Middle: Acupuncture

Bottom: Essential Oils

Meanwhile, the following are a group of stretches for the chest & shoulder area, which you can do on their own, or in conjunction with the neck stretches in The Celt issue one. **If at any time you feel any sharp or stabbing pain, discontinue the stretch.** It's very important that you listen to your body - a stretch may be a tad uncomfortable, but if it is downright painful or unbearable, you are going too far.

### **Shoulder Stretch #1 - Across the Chest**

1. Draw one arm across your chest.
2. Bring up the opposite arm, bent at the elbow (as if you were doing an upper cut) to your arm across your chest, pulling the drawn arm into your body.
3. Repeat on opposite side.

*Image on page one.*



Stretch #1 Across the chest

### **Shoulder Stretch #2 - Elbow Pull**

1. Bring one arm all the way up, fingers pointing towards the sky.
2. Bend the elbow, so your hand falls behind the head but the arm is still fully flexed.
3. Draw the other arm up to grasp the elbow, and **pull gently**.



Stretch #2 Elbow pull

### **Shoulder Stretch #3 - Pectoralis Active Stretches**

#### **Pectoralis Major**

1. Find a corner or door frame. Place the forearm, hand pointing up, and elbow on the frame *at a 90 degree angle*.
2. Gently walk through the door, keeping all aspects of your forearm and elbow on the door frame, until you feel a comfortable stretch. Don't lean your body weight through the door frame; keep your body straight.
3. With about 20% of your strength, press your forearm into the door frame for 10 seconds.
4. When the 10 seconds are up, take a deep belly breath, and on the exhale walk a little further through the door, until you feel your new end range (comfortable stretch). Hold for 10 seconds.
5. Repeat up to 4 times.



Stretch #3 Pec Minor  
45 Degree Angle

### **Pectoralis Minor**

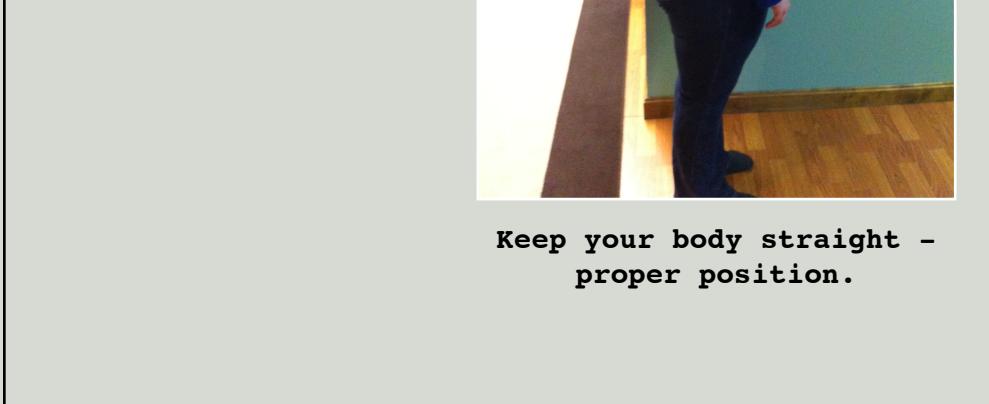
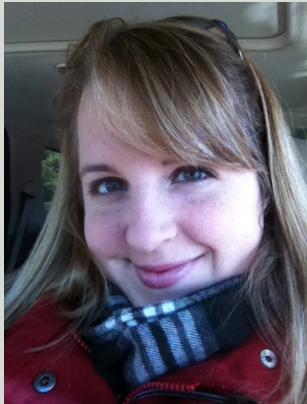
1. Find a corner or door frame. Place the forearm, hand pointing up, and elbow on the frame at a 45 degree angle.
2. Gently walk through the door, keeping all aspects of your forearm and elbow on the door frame, until you feel a comfortable stretch. Don't lean your body weight through the door frame; keep your body straight.
3. With about 20% of your strength, press your forearm into the door frame for 10 seconds.
4. When the 10 seconds are up, take a deep belly breath, and on the exhale walk a little further through the door, until you feel your new end range (comfortable stretch). Hold for 10 seconds.
5. Repeat up to 4 times.

With daily use of these stretches, you should see a marked improvement in flexibility of the shoulder and chest.

**Note:**

**the preceding article is for informational purposes only and is not intended to diagnose or prescribe any illness or condition, or be a substitute for the advice provided by your physician or other healthcare professional.**

**When in doubt, please consult your physician.**



**NO Leaning through the door frame!**



**Keep your body straight - proper position.**

Jackie Lewis is a New York State Licensed & Nationally Certified Massage Therapist, Certified Clinical Aromatherapist, and Certified Kripalu Yoga Teacher and works on the road and also in her office in Georgia, VT. She is also a Grade 1 Piper in good standing with the Eastern United States Pipe Band Association, and Pipe Sergeant and founding member of the Catamount Pipe Band Grade 4 in addition to prior experience in Grade 2 and Grade 1 bands in the United States.