

How to Use a Massage Gun for Shoulder Pain

When you have shoulder pain, and you want to use a massage gun to help decrease it keep the following issues in mind.

1. The Pectoralis Major and Minor, and the Latissimus Dorsi can greatly affect the posture of the shoulder if they are tight. If the three muscles are tight, they can internally rotate the shoulder and/or cause the shoulder blade to be depressed. Either issue can lead to an impingement at the shoulder. So, for many the first muscles they should massage are the Pectoralis Major/Minor or Latissimus Dorsi. We would recommend massaging across the fibers.
2. Muscles that can greatly affect the shoulder blade and therefore the shoulder in a secondary fashion include the trapezius, the levator scapula, and the rhomboids. If any are tight and painful, we would apply a massage to them.
3. If you are presenting with a tendonitis (bicep, or supraspinatus), cross fiber massage using the massage gun with the ball attachment. Apply the pressure of the massage head to the tendon from a sideways angle. Apply the massage across the fibers of the tendon.
4. Muscles of the rotator cuff may be sore. All four rotator cuff muscles originate within the shoulder blade (supraspinatus, infraspinatus, teres minor, and subscapularis). Because of their proximity to bone you may need to use the air-filled head attachment. The subscapularis is unreachable due to its position under the scapula. The Teres Major may also be sore.
5. The deltoid muscle may also be sore and can easily be massaged.

Use the following guidelines to choose the appropriate attachment:

- a. *Small Round Head Attachment*: Less aggressive to moderate. Great for tendonitis or tenosynovitis if used sideways.
- b. *Air-filled (Pneumatic) Attachment*: Probably the least aggressive head. Great for use around bony surfaces and sensitive muscle groups. Good for the palm of the hand and the palm side of the fingers.
- c. *Bullet Head Attachment*: Aggressive. May be helpful with treating trigger points or knots in the forearm.
- d. *Plastic Flat Head*: Moderate. Okay for forearm.