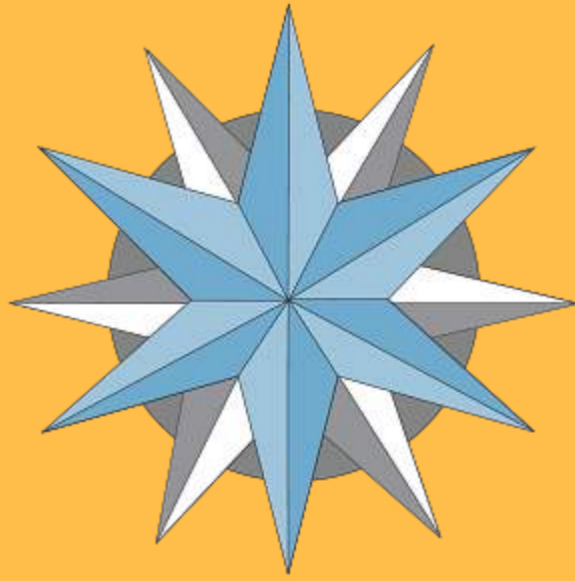




HINDMARSH AND FITZROY PHYSIOTHERAPY CLINICS



5 of the most dangerous shoulder exercises



A LITTLE ABOUT SHOULDERS

We know not everyone has the capacity or time to see one of our physios for help with injury prevention. But at Hindmarsh and Fitzroy Physiotherapy we are passionate about education. Knowledge is power and hopefully we can help you to understand some of the common shoulder exercises that cause injuries in our sports people.

Over 1 million shoulder injuries are reported each year and occur primarily in a gym setting.

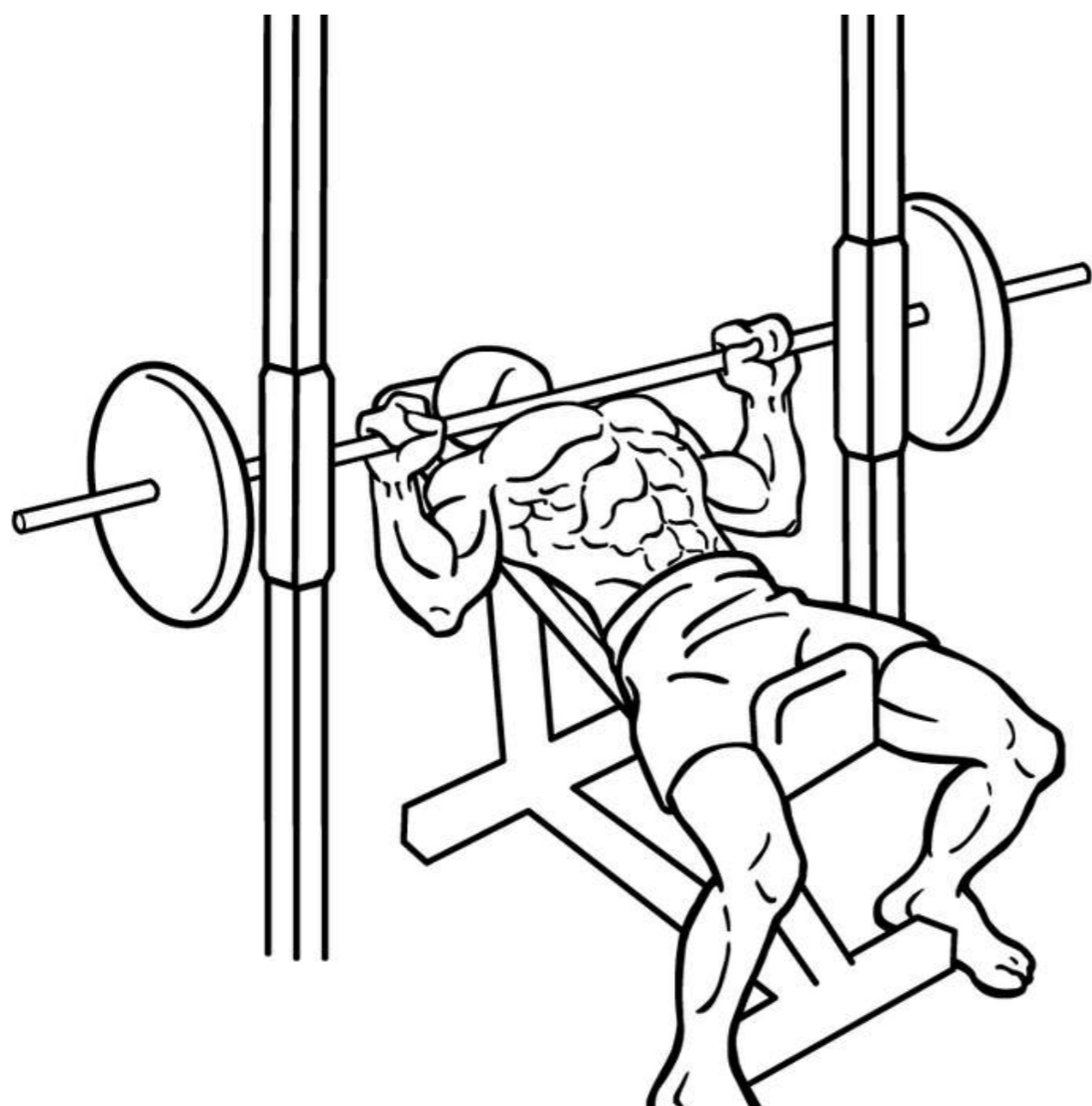
Have you ever experienced shoulder pain after your gym workout? This is a common complaint for many people who perform resistance training on a regular basis. It is often felt as an aching or sharp pain in the front of the shoulder or lateral upper arm with overhead activities, reaching behind the back or even just sleeping on the shoulder. These symptoms are often an indication of rotator cuff inflammation or injury..

The shoulder is an incredible structure. It is complex, versatile and efficient. The shoulder is the only joint that can rotate 360 degrees, making it the most mobile. The shoulder joint also allows you to serve a tennis ball, roll a bowling ball, press overhead against resistance and raise your arms out to either the sides or the front of your body while holding dumbbells in your hands. These capabilities make the shoulder joint, the most varied in function. Unfortunately, because of its complexity, it is also the most vulnerable to injury.

These problems can often be prevented by modifying some of the common dangerous shoulder exercises. Read on...

**This e-book is not intended as a substitute for medical advice or treatment and should not be interpreted as such. If you are experiencing any of the symptoms mentioned in the e-book please contact our physiotherapists for a comprehensive assessment and treatment plan. Always seek advice from a qualified medical professional and use of this information is at your own risk.*

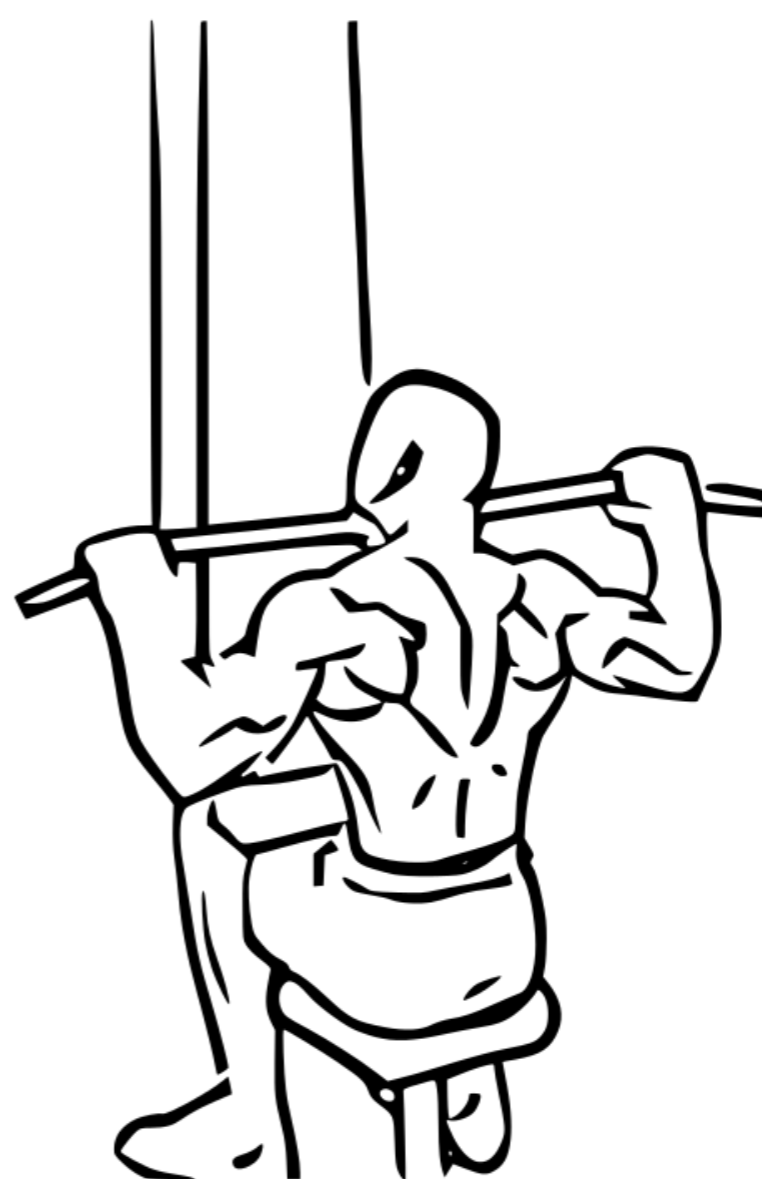
THE FIRST TWO - BRIEFLY...



Bench Press

This common exercise is chosen to build the chest, along with the anterior deltoid and triceps. Most people are taught to take the bar down until it lightly touches the chest. However, this is thought to be unsafe as it exposes the anterior shoulder capsule to excessive load, additionally compressing the soft tissue of the rotator cuff between the humerus and the acromion. Gradually over time, with repeated sets and heavier loads, the rotator cuff becomes inflamed..

People with any anterior shoulder laxity (loose joints) or history of subluxation / dislocation are at even further risk for rotator cuff injury or labral (shoulder cartilage) damage. Furthermore, you also have the potential to rupture the pectoralis tendon with full range pressing during heavy loads. The safe answer is to lower the bar until the upper arm is parallel to the floor (elbow bent to 90 degrees). This then prevents the gleno-humeral (shoulder joint) from moving into the unsafe range. The same advice can be applied to push-ups.



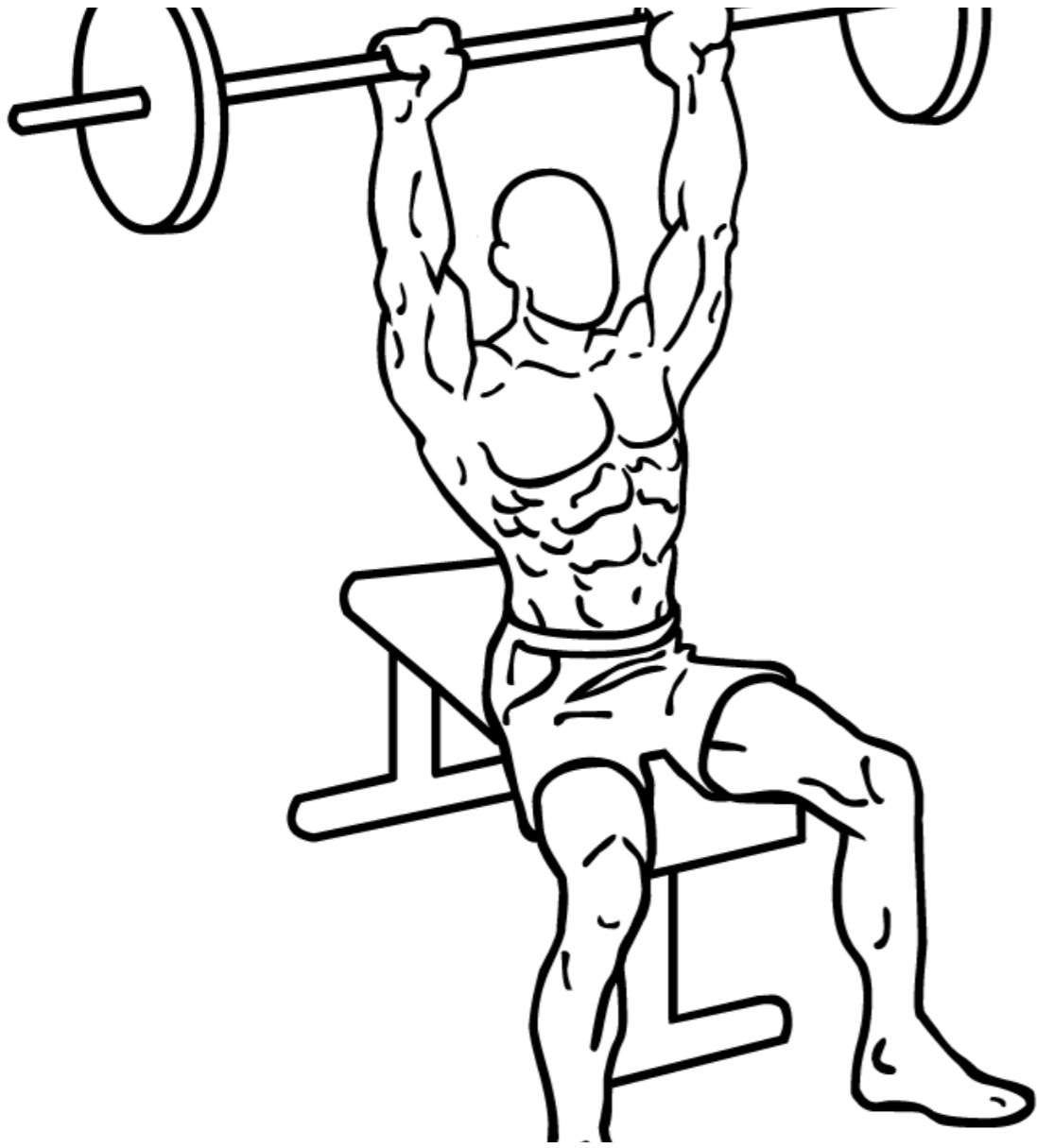
Lat Pull Downs

"This is a good exercise to strengthen the back, but when done behind the head it can cause problems. Like the bench press, pulling the bar down behind the head places the humerus in such a position that the rotator cuff can be compressed. This may also depend on other factors, including the shape of a person's acromion and degree of any present arthritis, but the risk outweighs any benefit.

Keeping the bar in front of the head still accomplishes the same movement for the target muscle, while eliminating the risk of shoulder injury.

Remember not to sway during the movement, and position the body in a slightly reclined position, pulling the bar toward the sternum. Another important reason not to do this exercise behind the neck is that it places undue stress on the cervical spine.

AND THEN THERE IS ...

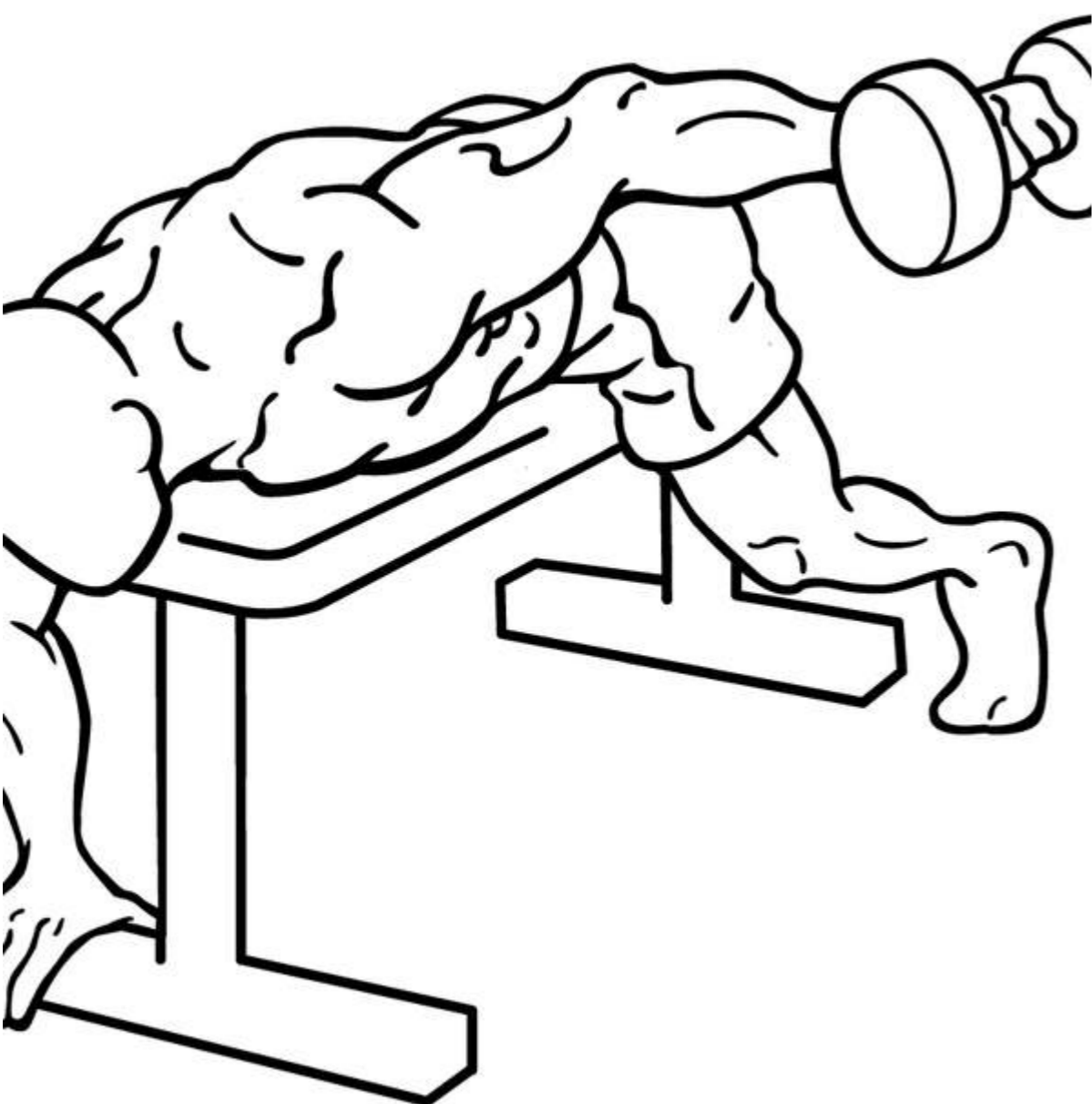
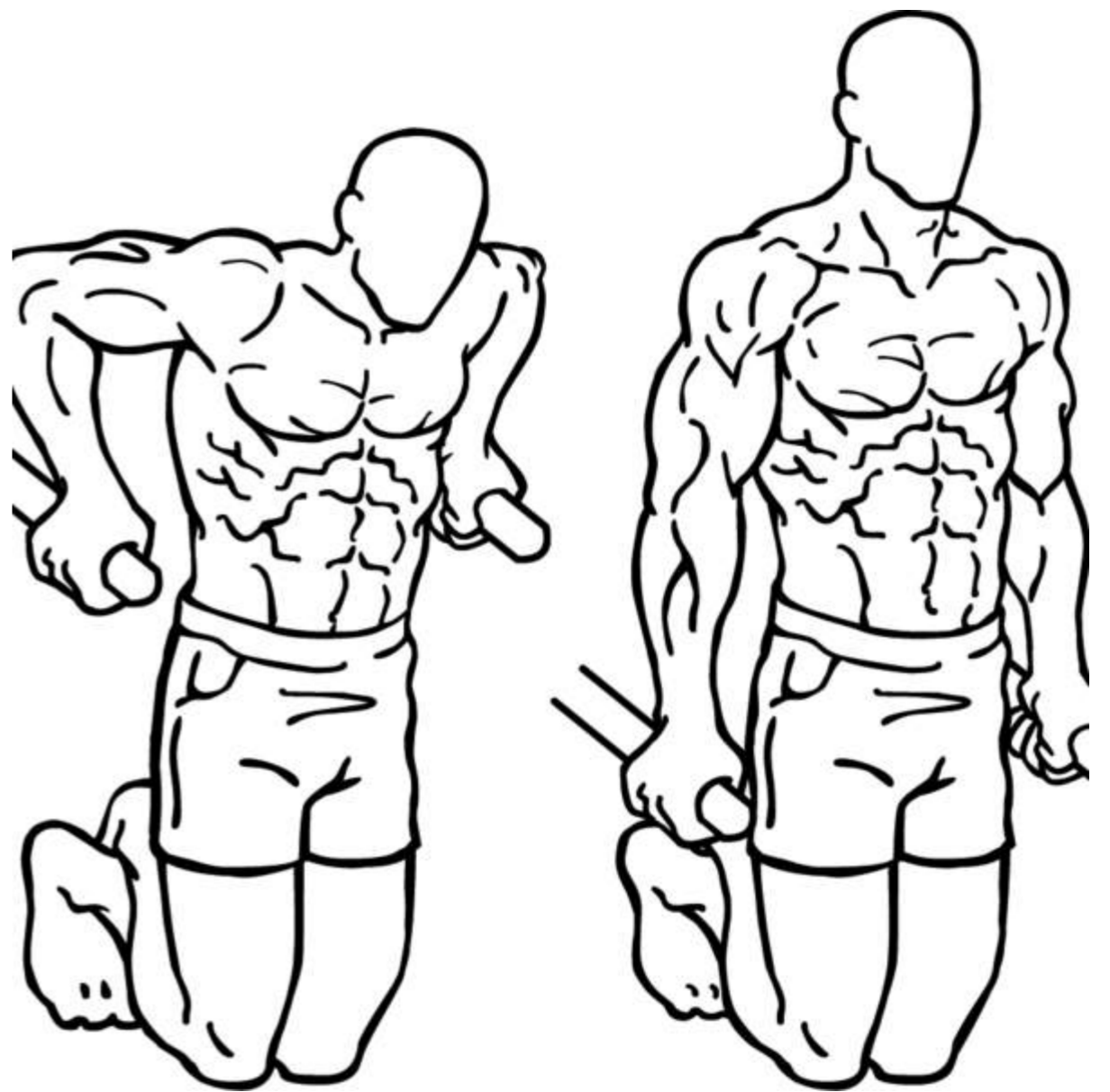


Military Press

This exercise when performed behind the neck with a bar, positions the shoulder in the above mentioned vulnerable position. Repeatedly done, the rotator cuff can become inflamed. Similar to behind the neck pull downs, you also expose your neck to unnecessary stress. It is safer to perform this exercise in front of the head or utilize dumbbells and work in the scapular plane. You must watch that you avoid arching the low back and it also best to use a bench with back support to prevent this.

Dips / Upright Row

As before, the key mistake made with these exercises is allowing the shoulder to move beyond 90 degrees relative to a position parallel to the floor or perpendicular to the body. We always recommend stopping at 90 degrees to protect the shoulder capsule and the rotator cuff.



Dumbbell Lateral Raise

This exercise is often done incorrectly. The mistakes include lifting too much weight, keeping the arms straight, and raising the arms out away from the body in the plane of the body. The force on the rotator cuff reaches 90% of your body weight when the arms are raised to 90 degrees with the arms straight and in the plane of the body. That is a lot of force on four relatively small rotator cuff muscles.

Lateral Raise Continued

The target muscle is the lateral deltoid, but the rotator cuff is extremely active, and it functions to allow you to raise the arm by depressing the humerus so that it passes under the acromion during active elevation. When heavy loads are introduced in the wrong plane of motion, disaster usually occurs. The proper way to execute a lateral raise is to keep the elbows comfortably flexed (20-30 degrees) and raise the arm to no higher than parallel to the floor. The arm should be in the scapular plane of motion (approximately 30-45 degrees from being perpendicular to the body) and the weight should be relatively light. Once you feel you have to shrug or use momentum to raise the weight, you need to rest or lower the weight. This is possibly one of the worst exercises for the shoulder if done incorrectly.

Shouldering a problem- here

How to avoid weight training injuries- here

In Summary

In summary, good intentions may spell bad results for the shoulder if proper form is lacking. The rotator cuff and shoulder joint is extremely vulnerable to heavy loads and repetitive bouts of exercise. Gradually, it may become inflamed and hinder or limit your workout altogether. Be sure to master form before increasing weight, and do not attempt to work through pain, as this often perpetuates the problem. Remember to assess risk and reward at all times, and rest assured that these modifications will not hinder your gains. Instead, they will prevent missed time in the gym and produce happier, healthier shoulders!



WE CAN HELP - CALL US...

Scientific research continues to assert the effectiveness of physiotherapy interventions in the management of both acute and long standing sporting injuries. This requires a detailed and thorough assessment to gain an understanding of the contributing factors and likely mechanisms involved. Part of a detailed physiotherapy assessment will help identify positions and movements you find aggravating or relieving. Analysis of these will then help form the basis of tailored manual and therapeutic techniques, exercise programs and home management strategies to treat your injury.

How a Physiotherapist can help with fitness goals

Physios are movement experts, and work with people of all ages and levels of activity. During a visit, our physios can:

- Check your flexibility, strength, and endurance of muscles to support your desired level of activity.
- Ensure that symptoms are due to overuse or overtraining and not something more serious
- Identify training errors to ensure a safe fitness plan, no matter your previous level of activity.
- Correct biomechanical problems in form with your chosen activity to avoid overuse of a susceptible body part.
- Provide appropriate training plan to minimize risk of injury and help you safely meet your fitness goals.

At Hindmarsh and Fitzroy Physiotherapy Clinics we are friendly experienced, patient focused professionals with a passion for helping a wide variety of people. We know that there are many excellent physiotherapy practices to choose, but finding one you can count on and build a relationship with, knowing they have pride and expertise in their approach, high quality treatment regimes, empathy and support is not easy. This is us. Please call or email us for an appointment and we look forward to helping you.

Contact us here

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