



MOVE STRONG
HEALTH & PERFORMANCE

POST-REHAB PROGRAM

SHOULDER IMPINGEMENT

12-WEEK TRAINING PROGRAM

3-PHASE PROGRESSION | MOBILITY | STRENGTH | OVERHEAD PERFORMANCE

The information in this document is for movement and performance purposes only, not medical diagnosis or treatment. Athletes should be cleared by a qualified healthcare professional before progressive loading.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Designed as a 12-week, 3-phase progression for shoulder impingement presentations after the acute painful stage. The program moves from mobility and motor control into strength, then overhead performance. It is appropriate only when the athlete is cleared for progressive loading. It is not intended for suspected rotator cuff tear, instability, fracture, nerve symptoms, unresolved night/rest pain, or other red flags.

FREQUENCY

2-3 sessions per week.

PAIN GUIDE

0-2/10 is acceptable. 3/10 is acceptable only if it settles quickly and is not worse the next day. 4/10 or sharp pinching means regress the movement.

PROGRESSION

Increase range, then volume, then load, then speed.

AVOID EARLY

Painful overhead pressing, deep dips, upright rows, behind-neck pressing/pulldowns, and aggressive sleeper stretching if it causes pinching.

Tempo Key: 3-1-1-1 = 3 sec eccentric, 1 sec pause, 1 sec lift, 1 sec reset. ISO = isometric hold. CONTROLLED = smooth, no shrugging or rib flare. SCAP PLANE = 30-45 degrees forward of the body, thumb-up position.

PHASE SNAPSHOT

PHASE	FOCUS	WEEKS	KEY GOAL
Phase I	<i>Tissue Irritability Control & Fundamental Movement Restoration</i>	1-4	Pain-free elevation, scapular control, low-load cuff tolerance
Phase II	<i>Accumulation</i>	5-8	Cuff capacity, scapular strength, controlled pressing volume
Phase III	<i>Overhead Performance</i>	9-12	Full overhead pressing, loaded carries, sport-specific patterns

PROGRAM RULES

Never train through a painful arc. If symptoms increase week-over-week, regress one phase. Pain the day after training is a key indicator – if it is worse than before the session, reduce volume by 30% and reassess. Progress is earned, not scheduled.

PHASE I

TISSUE IRRITABILITY CONTROL & FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENT RESTORATION

GOAL: Restore pain-free elevation, scapular control, thoracic mobility, and low-load rotator cuff tolerance.

EXERCISE	METHOD / TEMPO	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	REST
MOBILIZATION						
A. Thoracic extension over foam roller	<i>Breathing + active extension</i>	1×6-8 breaths	1×6-8 breaths	1×8-10 breaths	1×8-10 breaths	—
B. Cross-body posterior shoulder stretch	<i>Gentle, no pinch</i>	1×45s	1×45s	1×60s	1×60s	—
ACTIVATION						
A. Band ER isometric at side	<i>ISO hold, towel under elbow</i>	2×5×10s	2×5×10s	2×6×10s	2×6×10s	30s
B. Serratus wall slide	<i>Controlled upward rotation</i>	2×8	2×10	2×10-12	2×12	30s
C. Prone low-trap lift-off	<i>Thumb up, no shrug</i>	2×8	2×8-10	2×10	2×10-12	30s
INTEGRATION - NEUROMUSCULAR						
A. Quadruped scapular clocks	<i>Controlled</i>	3×20s	3×25s	3×30s	3×30s	60s
INTEGRATION - STRENGTHENING						
A. Chest-supported DB row	<i>3-1-1-1</i>	3×12	3×12	3×10	3×10	90s
B. Incline push-up plus	<i>3-1-1-1</i>	3×8	3×8-10	3×10	3×10-12	90s
C. Side-lying external rotation	<i>3-1-1-1</i>	3×10	3×10-12	3×12	3×12-15	60-90s

COACHING NOTES

Keep all pressing and reaching below the painful arc. The athlete should feel the serratus, lower trap, and posterior cuff working without upper trap dominance. Regress wall slides to a smaller range if symptoms appear near the top.

PROGRESS TO PHASE II WHEN

- Pain-free daily activities; no painful arc during active shoulder elevation
- Ability to perform incline push-up plus without winging
- Side-lying external rotation with clean control and no anterior shoulder pain
- Pain no worse the day after training

PHASE II ACCUMULATION

GOAL: Build cuff capacity, scapular strength, controlled pressing volume, and tolerance to loaded elevation.

EXERCISE	METHOD / TEMPO	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	REST
MOBILIZATION						
A. Thoracic open book rotation	Active ROM	1×8/side	1×8/side	1×10/side	1×10/side	—
B. Pec minor doorway stretch	Gentle, ribs down	1×45s	1×45s	1×60s	1×60s	—
ACTIVATION						
A. Band ER at 45° abduction	2-1-2-1	2×8	2×10	2×10-12	2×12	30s
B. Wall slide with lift-off	Controlled	2×8	2×8-10	2×10	2×10-12	30s
C. Face pull to external rotation	Pause at end range	2×10	2×10	2×12	2×12	45s
INTEGRATION - NEUROMUSCULAR						
A. Tall plank shoulder taps	Anti-rotation	3×8/side	3×10/side	3×12/side	3×12/side	60s
B. Wall ball circles at 90°	Small fast circles	3×20s ea	3×25s ea	3×30s ea	3×30s ea	60s
INTEGRATION - STRENGTHENING						
A. 1-arm cable row	3-1-1-1	3×10	3×10	3-4×8	3-4×8	90s
B. Half-kneeling landmine press	Scap plane	3×8	3×8-10	3×10	3×10-12	90s
C. DB scaption raise	Thumb up, pain-free	3×10	3×10-12	3×12	3×12-15	60-90s
D. Farmer / suitcase carry	Ribs down, shoulder packed	3×20m	3×25m	3×30m	4×30m	90s

COACHING NOTES

The landmine press is the main bridge from horizontal pressing to overhead pressing. Keep the arm in the scapular plane and stop before any pinch. Rows should not become lumbar extension or shoulder shrugging. Scaption should feel like controlled deltoid and cuff work, not anterior shoulder compression.

PROGRESS TO PHASE III WHEN

- Landmine press to forehead height pain-free with controlled scapular movement
- DB scaption raise to 90° or above without a painful arc
- Farmer carry 3×30m without upper trap dominance or shoulder elevation
- No symptom flare the day after sessions

PHASE III OVERHEAD PERFORMANCE

GOAL: Develop full overhead pressing capacity, loaded carry tolerance, and sport-specific shoulder patterns.

EXERCISE	METHOD / TEMPO	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	REST
MOBILIZATION						
A. Overhead banded distraction	Active ROM, pain-free	1×8/side	1×8/side	1×10/side	1×10/side	—
B. Lat stretch with rotation	Gentle, ribs down	1×45s	1×45s	1×60s	1×60s	—
ACTIVATION						
A. Band pull-apart at 135°	2-1-2-1	2×12	2×12	2×15	2×15	30s
B. Bottoms-up KB press (light)	Controlled, packed shoulder	2×5/side	2×6/side	2×8/side	2×8/side	45s
INTEGRATION - NEUROMUSCULAR						
A. Overhead carry (KB or DB)	Packed shoulder, ribs down	3×20m	3×25m	3×30m	4×30m	60s
B. Turkish get-up (light)	Slow, deliberate	2×2/side	2×3/side	3×3/side	3×3/side	90s
INTEGRATION - STRENGTHENING						
A. Strict overhead press (BB or DB)	3-1-1-1	3×6	3×6-8	4×6	4×6-8	2min
B. Weighted pull-up or lat pulldown	3-1-1-1	3×6	3×8	4×6	4×8	90s
C. Cable face pull + press-out	Pause at end range	3×12	3×12	3×15	3×15	60s
D. Waiter's carry	Packed shoulder, upright torso	3×20m	3×25m	3×30m	4×30m	90s

COACHING NOTES

The strict overhead press is the culmination of the program. Load should be earned — if the athlete cannot maintain a neutral lumbar spine and packed shoulder at the top, reduce load. The Turkish get-up is a full-body integration tool; do not rush it. Overhead carry and waiter's carry build end-range tolerance under load.

RETURN-TO-PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- Strict overhead press through full range with no painful arc
- Overhead carry 3×30m without upper trap elevation or rib flare
- Turkish get-up 3×3/side with consistent shoulder packing
- No symptom flare the day after overhead loading sessions

EXERCISE REGRESSIONS

If an exercise causes pain above 3/10 or a painful arc, use the regression listed below.

EXERCISE	REGRESSION
Overhead press	Landmine press (scap plane)
Strict overhead press	Half-kneeling landmine press
Weighted pull-up	Lat pulldown (neutral grip)
Push-up	Wall push-up plus
90/90 ER	ER at side
Wall slide lift-off	Regular wall slide
Scaption raise	Shorter range scaption
Pulldown	Chest-supported row
Plank shoulder taps	Quadruped shoulder taps
Overhead carry	Suitcase carry (same side)

PRACTICAL WEEKLY LAYOUT

DAY	FOCUS	NOTES
Day 1	Full program – moderate load	Run all phase exercises through the working ranges. Keep load conservative early in each week.
Day 2	Mobility + activation + lighter strength	Recovery-oriented session. Focus on quality, breathing, and scapular control.
Day 3	Full program – slightly heavier or higher volume	Add load or sets only if Day 1 left no next-day symptom flare.

INTEGRATION NOTE

For athletes already training lower body or conditioning, place this shoulder program before upper-body lifting or on a separate accessory day. Keep total weekly pressing volume conservative until symptoms are consistently stable.

RECOVERY NOTE

Sleep, nutrition, and stress management directly affect tissue healing and pain sensitivity. Encourage the athlete to prioritise 7-9 hours of sleep and adequate protein intake throughout the program.

RED FLAGS – STOP & SEEK CARE

Pause progression and consult a qualified healthcare professional if any of the following occur:

- Night pain that does not improve
- Numbness, tingling, or radiating symptoms
- Pain that worsens week to week
- No improvement after 3-4 weeks of appropriate loading
- Loss of strength that is sudden or significant
- Feelings of instability, slipping, or dead arm
- Pain above 4/10 during or after sessions