


Strengthening Your Racket Swing

With paddle season in full swing, it is important to ensure  that you strengthen your infraspinatus muscle. Being a part of the rotator cuff, the infraspinatus sits at the back of the scapula and attaches into the head of the humerus. As you serve or hit a forehand shot in racket sports, it is the job of the infraspinatus to slow down the arm after contact with the ball. This muscle has to absorb tremendous loads to decelerate the arm, which can lead to overuse and adhesion formation in the muscle. Oftentimes, this overuse and adhesion formation in the back of the shoulder can restrict and slow down certain motions at the shoulder joint, which can lead to poor tracking of the humerus in socket. What's more, these adhesions and poor biomechanics can cause pain and inflammation in the top and front of the shoulder joint.



Typically, the best way to address this issue is first with manual therapy such as Active Release Techniques to address the muscles. If there is no inflammation in the tissues, simple rehabilitation exercises can be done to strengthen and stretch the muscle. Below are some exercises to help keep your shoulder healthy.

THE MOVE

Posterior Shoulder Self-Myofascial



The move is designed to target and reduce adhesions to the infraspinatus and posterior deltoid muscles.

- Start by standing with your feet shoulder width apart and your body angled at 45 degrees toward the wall so the back of the shoulder is touching. Using a lacrosse ball (tennis ball works but not as well), place it between your shoulder and the wall.
- While maintaining pressure with a slight lean, slowly rotate your torso so the ball rolls along your muscles. You may have to play around with the ball placement to find the tight and restricted spots. Use the diagram to help visualize the muscles.
- Spend 1-2 minutes rolling out the back of each shoulder each day.
- As you get comfortable with this move, try pulling the treatment side arm across your body to stretch the muscles as you roll them.

Additional Moves

To strengthen your infraspinatus muscle, also perform the exercises listed below. The exercises can be found on the Chicago Chiropractic & Sports Medicine website at

- Shoulder External Rotation
- Foam Roller T-Spine
- Scapular Stability

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