

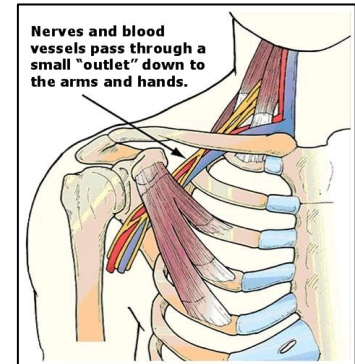


THORACIC OUTLET SYNDROME



What is thoracic outlet syndrome?

Thoracic outlet syndrome is a disorder that occurs when the blood vessels or the nerves in the space between the collarbone and the first rib becomes compressed by the muscles in the neck and the shoulder. This space is called the thoracic outlet. This compression can cause pain in the shoulders and neck and numbness into the fingers.

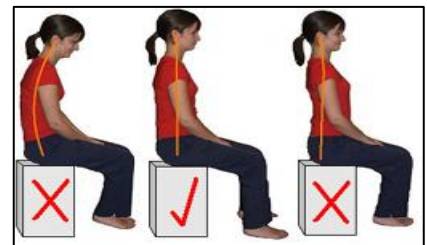


What causes thoracic outlet syndrome?

Common causes of thoracic outlet syndrome include physical trauma, repetitive injuries from job-related or sports-related activities, and certain anatomical defects, such as having an extra rib or pregnancy. Poor posture and obesity can also lead to thoracic outlet syndrome.

What are possible signs and symptoms?

- Pain, numbness, and tingling in neck, shoulder or into fingers and forearm
- Weakness or clumsiness in the hand
- Signs of poor circulation into hands – cold hands, swelling, or bluish color
- Symptoms worsen when carrying items or when raising arms overhead



How does physical therapy help?

- Stretching – tight neck and arm muscles
- Cervical, shoulder, and scapula muscle strengthening
- Manual therapy – massage, muscle energy techniques, mobilization, stretching, myofascial release
- Education about posture, body mechanics, and activity modification
- Modalities – electrical stimulation, ultrasound, cold laser

