

Can Massages Help with a Pinched Nerve in the Shoulder? A Closer Look

Pinched nerves can be incredibly painful and frustrating, often leaving you struggling to do everyday tasks. If you're one of the [85 out of every 100,000](#) Americans who suffer from a pinched nerve, you're probably on the lookout for relief.

You've probably tried everything - from painkillers to physical therapy - and found little relief. But did you know that massage therapy might be able to help?

In this article, we'll take a closer look at whether or not massages can help relieve the pain and discomfort associated with pinched nerves, including pinched nerves in the shoulder.

Read on to learn more!

What Is a Pinched Nerve?

When one part of your body is compressed by surrounding tissues, such as cartilage, bones, tendons, or muscles, you may get a [pinched nerve](#). This often causes pain, tingling, and/or numbness in different areas of the body.

They often originate in the neck or along the back. You may also experience a pinched nerve in your elbow, wrist, and/or hand.

While it can be painful, pinched nerves are rarely serious. But if you leave them untreated, they could cause permanent nerve damage and chronic pain.

What Are Common Locations for a Pinched Nerve?

Pinched nerves can happen in any part of the body depending on the nerves affected. However, the most common locations for a pinched nerve include:

- Neck and/or shoulder - due to compression in the cervical nerves
- Back and/or upper chest - due to compression in the thoracic and lumbar nerves
- Elbow and/or arm - due to ulnar nerve pressure (you would feel this when you hit your "funny bone," for example)
- Wrist and/or hand - may be due to carpal tunnel syndrome

How Do You Know if You Have a Pinched Nerve in the Shoulder?

A pinched nerve in the shoulder can happen when nearby tissue irritates or compresses a [nerve in the neck](#). This often leads to pain, numbness, and discomfort in the shoulder and/or arm.

Some other signs that you may have a pinched nerve in your shoulder include:

- Pain in the neck when turning your head
- Numbness or tingling in the shoulder, arm, hand, or fingers
- Weakness in the arm, hand, or shoulder
- Difficulty moving your shoulder or arm due to shoulder pain

A pinched nerve in the shoulder may flare up and then subside until it becomes critical enough to require medical treatment or resolves.

How Does a Pinched Nerve Happen?

You might be wondering, "How did I get a pinched nerve?"

Pinching a nerve can be caused by any number of things, including herniated discs, bone spurs, carpal tunnel syndrome, and even poor posture.

Certain conditions can also affect bone or tissue, causing them to compress nerves.

Aging

As we age, our spine and its discs flatten and lose water, causing the vertebrae to grow closer together. This can lead to bone spurs, which are growths the body produces in response to the shrinking of the spine. These spurs can put pressure on nerves, causing a pinched nerve.

Rheumatoid Arthritis

Rheumatoid arthritis is an autoimmune and chronic inflammatory disorder. The immune system attacks tissues in your body, in this instance, it attacks the lining in the joints. This can cause pain and inflammation, which may apply pressure on the nerves nearby.

Sports Injury or Accident

If you have a sudden sports injury or accident, you could end up with a pinched nerve. For instance, a herniated disc can develop from any straining, twisting, or lifting activity leading to a pinched nerve.

Repetitive Motion

Repetitive motion, such as typing on a computer, can also lead to pinched nerves. This is due to the fact that the muscles and tendons are put under strain and stress, which can compress the nerves.

Obesity

If you are overweight, you are more likely to experience pinched nerves. This is because the extra weight can cause compression on the spine and other tissue surrounding the nerves.

Are There Self-Treatment Options?

There are a few things you can do to treat your pinched nerve at home.

Pinched nerves often resolve on their own, especially if you rest the affected area enough. You want to avoid any activities that might cause further damage. You could also try adding heat and/or ice to the affected area while you are resting it.

You can also try taking over-the-counter medications such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen. These medicines can reduce pain and inflammation associated with pinched nerves.

If your pinched nerve doesn't improve after a few days of home treatment, consider seeking additional help. For instance, you could try massage therapy or chiropractic care.

Can Massage Therapy Help?

In more moderate instances of pinched nerves, massage therapy can help. Massage improves blood circulation, relieves tension, and reduces inflammation. Each of these improvements can help to relieve the pain caused by pinched nerves.

- The primary goal of massage therapy should be to relieve the tension and pressure of the muscles and/or tissues pinching your nerve.
- Stress often accompanies pain associated with pinched nerves. Massages are great at helping with stress relief.
- If your pinched nerve pain is mild-to-moderate, massage therapy may help ease the pain and discomfort you are experiencing.

It is important to note that if you are experiencing any of the symptoms listed above, you should speak with a medical professional to get a correct diagnosis and treatment plan. In more severe cases of pinched nerves, massage therapy may not be enough on its own and other treatments such as physical therapy or surgery may be necessary.

Don't Suffer Alone

Suffering from a pinched nerve in the shoulder or any other type of pinched nerve?

Contact us today. We are more than happy to work with you on finding the best treatment plan to meet your individual needs.