Referred Shoulder Pain

**Situation:** Even when there is nothing wrong with your shoulder, several structures in your anatomy can cause pain in your shoulder when they are injured. This is called *referred shoulder pain*.

**Causes:** The neck and upper back are the most common areas of the body that—when injured—may cause referred pain to the shoulder. Some of the more common conditions which may cause this pain include: disc herniation or degeneration, facet joint sprain, and postural syndrome.

**Symptoms:** People with referred shoulder pain typically experience a dull ache in the shoulder that is poorly localized and may vary in severity or location. They may also experience pain or stiffness in other locations in the body such as the neck, upper back, arm, or forearm. In some cases, they may not experience symptoms at the originating injury location.

**Treatment:** In order to treat referred shoulder pain, the originating injury must be diagnosed and treated. This diagnosis will be made by the chiropractor and may include special testing such as an MRI, CT scan, or X-ray. Treatment options can include chiropractic care, acupuncture, physical therapy, and massage therapy. The chiropractor will help determine what type of treatments and modalities are appropriate for you.