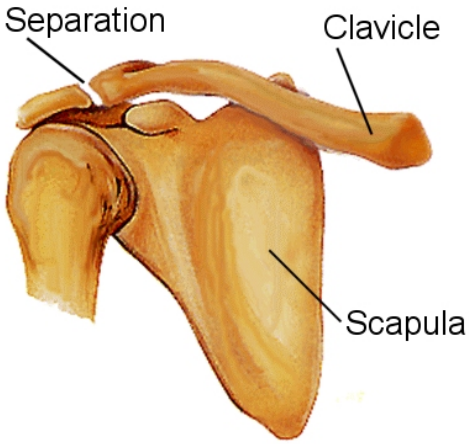
# Shoulder Separation
## (Acromio-Clavicular Separation)

You have a shoulder separation (*acromio-clavicular separation*). This occurs when an injury stretches or tears the ligaments that connect the top of the shoulder blade to the collar bone. Injury causes these bones to separate. A sling or splint may be applied to limit your range of motion.




### HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Apply ice to the injury for 15 to 20 minutes each hour while awake for the first 2 days. Put the ice in a plastic bag. Place a towel between the bag of ice and your skin.
- Avoid activities that increase the pain.
- Wear your sling or splint for one week or as directed by your caregiver. If you remove the sling to dress or bathe, be sure your arm remains in the same position as when the sling is on. Do not lift your arm.
- The splint must be tightened by another person every day. Tighten it enough to keep the shoulders held back. Allow enough room to place the index finger between the body and strap. Loosen the splint **immediately** if you feel numbness or tingling in your hands.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- If this is a severe injury, you may need a referral to a specialist. It is very important to keep any follow-up appointments in order to avoid any type of permanent shoulder disability or chronic pain problems.

### SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

Pain or swelling to the injury increases and is not relieved with medications.

### SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

Your arm becomes numb, pale, cold, or there are abnormal feelings (*sensations*) shooting into your fingertips**.**

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