

Comparing the Effects of Bilateral Shoulder Exercises to the Effects of Unilateral Shoulder Exercises on Unilateral Shoulder Dysfunctions. Beachner VR, Johnson CJ, Racine KM, Dronberger, JA. Rockhurst University.

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Purpose: The purpose of this study is to investigate whether or not bilateral shoulder exercises are more effective than unilateral exercises when treating unilateral problems.

Background: The use of unilateral strengthening exercises in the presence of unilateral shoulder dysfunction is well documented. However, there is limited information about the effects of bilateral exercise for unilateral shoulder dysfunction.

Subjects: While actively engaged in treatment, eight subjects with various unilateral shoulder dysfunctions were recruited for this study.

Methods: Subjects in both groups were instructed in seven shoulder strengthening exercises: three were instructed to perform all exercises unilaterally; five were instructed to perform all exercises bilaterally. Among all subjects, the course of care varied from three to six weeks.

Results: Both types of treatment had an equal effect on decreasing pain and increasing function: group assignment did not have an impact on the outcome measures.

Conclusions: Previous though limited studies have shown that unilateral or bilateral exercises are beneficial in reducing pain and in increasing function in patients with shoulder pathologies. This study is consistent with those findings; however, it did not find that the use of bilateral exercises is superior to unilateral exercise in terms of pain and functional outcomes.

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