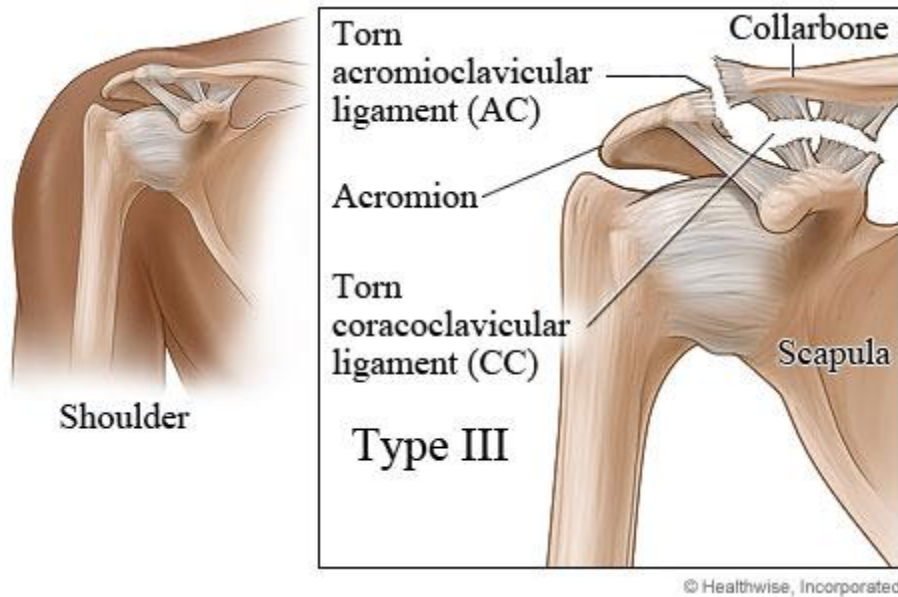


Vann is a 50 year old male who had an ATV accident two years prior to coming to see me. He had landed on his shoulder resulting in a Type III Shoulder Separation. What a Type III Shoulder Separation means is the acromion separated from the clavicle and the ligaments which supported the Acromioclavicular joint were completely torn away. There was not much that the doctors could do for him, other than give him pain medications and advise him to do certain exercises in order to keep mobility in the shoulder. His left clavicle protrudes beneath the skin approximately 1 1/2", visible as a prominent bump. Vann's occupation is a physical one, requiring use of his arms and shoulders so he lived on pain medications in order to make it through the day. As well as his shoulder injury, the bike landed on top of him injuring his left hip and it was assumed that the hip was just bruised. He has stabbing pain in his hip and he is awakened often with searing pain from his hip to his knee. He has tried physiotherapy without much success. He expected that this was going to be the way things were for the rest of his life, unable to do simple things with his arm and be in constant pain or haze from pain medications. Lack of sleep combined with the pain medications was causing moodiness and inattention.

Here is a picture of a shoulder before and after this type of separation.



Vann's X-ray of his shoulder.

First Session:

When Vann got in the chair, he could not put his left hand on the armrest as it hurt his shoulder too much. I noticed that the trapezius and the sternocleidomastoid muscles were both very swollen. I started the standard 15 minute chair massage, being very gentle on the left shoulder. His entire left side was very sensitive. When I did the right scapula, it was sensitive so I added TW5 and LI14 & LI15. He was unable to put his left arm behind his back so we did a modified version of the scapula massage again adding TW5, LI14 & LI15. It was

too much to do the bicycle action on his shoulders, so instead I did a very light rub and then although very tight, I was able to work GV14 and LI16 on the right side. I added left GB29, GB31, GB34 and GB39 along with GB40 to help with the hip problem. He noticed his hip pain has disappeared.

Acupressure points added to standard chair massage:

TW5: Master Point of the Yang Regulator Channel. Influences arms, shoulders, elbows, wrists & fingers

LI14: for pain and impairment of movement of elbow and arm, disorder of shoulder joint and surrounding tissue.

LI 15: for pain in shoulder and arm. Releases entire arm.

GB29: for disorders of hip joint and its surrounding soft tissue. Releases entire leg, pelvic organs. Low back pain, hip/shoulder connection.

GB31: for lumbago and leg pain, for any muscle conditions. Relaxes all smooth and striated muscles, releases lower back.

GB39: for stiffness and rigidity of neck, influential point for bone marrow, aids in healing of broken bones.

GB40: Source point for GB meridian, pain in hip, cramping and pain in legs

Second Session:

Vann said that his hip pain was absent for three days and he slept much better. His shoulder was not as painful for a short period but was back to its usual pain. The swelling of the trapezoid muscle was down a bit but he also had not been working. We did the same 15 minute Relaxfast chair massage, noticing that the left side was not as sensitive down the scapula. Again I added the same extra points for the shoulders, right side releasing quickly, left side very sensitive and slow to release. This time we also added BL38 on both sides. Again I used the same GB points to help relieve the hip pain. I was able to do the bicycle action on both shoulders with very little discomfort on the left side; again I modified it, working more behind the shoulder than on top of the shoulder. At the end of the session, there was a noticeable difference in hip and shoulder, no pain.

Additional acupressure points added to standard chair massage:

BL38: Strengthens entire body, traditionally used for chronic conditions. Helps to release the upper back and facilitate shoulder, neck and arm release.

Third & Fourth Sessions:

These sessions were the same as the second session. Both of us have noticed a loosening in his shoulder muscles. He is getting a less pain in both his shoulder and hip. Swelling seems to be diminishing as well.

Fifth Session:

Vann is noticing a definite difference, hip pain gone for most of the week, shoulder sore but not the same, was able to cut his pain medication in half. Again we did the standard 15 minutes chair massage again using the same additional points. He was able to rest his left arm on the arm rest now and the swelling in both the trapezoid and sternocleidomastoid muscles gone. Shoulder points still are slow to release on the left side and are painful. When doing the bicycle action on the shoulders, there was a popping sound and feeling, but he had no pain. The bone had popped down. At the end of the session, he said that his shoulder really felt good but he was afraid to move it too much. I was able to do GB21 on both sides with no pain.

Sixth Session:

Vann had a really good week, no pain in shoulder or hip. No pain medications at all and although he had been working was not doing super strenuous activities. Repeated the previous session, noticing all points released easily and no real pain. Clavicle is still in line.

Seventh Session:

Bad week, while working on a ladder, he strained shoulder and lower back. Pains are definitely not the same as they used to be but the shoulder pain is now in the upper arm instead of at the back of the shoulder. Clavicle has popped up again, but is lower than it used to be. Did the standard chair massage, left side back points very tender. Left shoulder very stiff to start but had loosened up by the end of session that included the extra points. He has taken a bit of pain medication but found he only needed it for one day and less than the dosage he was previously taking.

Eighth Session:

Had a better week and shoulder and hip felt much better after the last session. Clavicle is still popped up but is still lower than it was when he first starting coming for treatments. Did the standard chair massage with the additional points. Noticed a big difference in the shoulder muscles, nowhere near as tight as they have been. He is still having pain in his arm, but now it is in the bicep rather than the shoulder. Added LI11 to the additional points that we have been using since the beginning. At the end of the session, said he was feeling like his old self.

Additional acupressure point:

LI 11: Pain in shoulder and arm.

Conclusion:

My goal was to diminish Vann's reliance on pain killers and to help him retrieve his positive attitude toward life again. He really was not sure in the beginning that anything would work. He had been like this for two years and had seen doctors but there was nothing that could be done for him. The first session was painful for him, in some respects, I was surprised he agreed to a second session- I mean I told him I thought I could help him, not give him more pain. The fact that he noticed an immediate difference in his hip pain was my winning card! As each session came and went, his attitude became brighter as the reliance on pain medications diminished and his sleep patterns returned to normal. He learned to adjust some of his ways of doing things to keep from stretching the injured hip muscles, allowing them to heal and strengthen. His shoulder will never be completely "normal" again but if he can live without pain, his life will be normal. He has noticed since the sessions, he does have more mobility in his arm and it is possible with future sessions, we may be able to get the clavicle to stay down as the muscles slowly strengthen.

Working with Vann, my belief in the power of chair massage and acupressure grew. I am continually amazed at the power of acupressure. The standard sequence of the chair massage works to improve the flow of energy throughout the body, adding additional points for specific problems is easily done. By increasing the blood flow and tonifying body organs, relaxing muscles, we allow the body to heal itself.