

Rationale: Adhesive capsulitis (frozen shoulder) is a common cause of shoulder pain and affects approximately 2-4% of the general population. Corticosteroid injections and physiotherapy are among the most widely used treatment modalities in adhesive capsulitis, in both primary and secondary healthcare settings. According to the current literature, there is no consensus on the role of physiotherapy in the treatment of frozen shoulder.

Objective: To evaluate the difference in functional outcome, measured by a patient self-reported outcome measure, the SPADI, after treatment of adhesive capsulitis with or without physiotherapy in addition to an intra-articular glenohumeral injection with corticosteroids.

Study design: Prospective randomised trial (multicentre)

Study population: Adult patients with clinical signs and symptoms of a frozen shoulder presenting to the outpatient clinic of the department of orthopaedic surgery of the Slotervaartziekenhuis. Conservative treatment might have failed in the previous three months. As part of the standard current practice, all patients with a frozen shoulder in both groups receive an ultrasound guided corticosteroid injection in the glenohumeral joint.

Intervention: A standardised physiotherapy program.

Main study parameters/endpoints: Primary outcome: Function, measured by the SPADI

Secondary outcomes: Numeric pain rating scale (NPRS), General health (SF-36), ROM, patient perceived satisfaction (PPSI).

Nature and extent of the burden and risks associated with participation: Subjective scores to fill out, and an increased number of (non-invasive) measurements of the function of the shoulder. Follow up consists of three moments at 6 weeks, 3 months and 6 months. The physiotherapy program does not differ much of the current regular treatment. However, participating physiotherapists will be provided with a written treatment protocol containing detailed guidelines for these frozen shoulder patients. The benefit of the study is to provide an answer to the question if we have to treat a patient with a frozen shoulder with a physiotherapy program after a corticosteroid injection.