

## Hard Work Earned Me Atrophy

### Description

No, I donâ€™t mean a *trophy*, I seriously have earned myself atrophy from what I believe to be hard work.



While hard work most certainly can literally earn many people a trophy, pushing too hard or using bad form can result in atrophy. In my case, Iâ€™m assuming the latter with improper form from heavy lifting when working out is the main culprit.

Thatâ€™s right, bench press and overhead press is way more technical than most people are aware. Itâ€™s not simply a matter of lifting the bar up and down, but maintaining complete control throughout the entire movement by focusing on the position of every part of your body. There are entire books written on how to perform the major compound lifts, so I wonâ€™t get into here, but check out [Starting Strength](#) to really learn the biomechanics of the basic barbell lifts.



This book contains the fundamentals of any real strength training program and really all you need to learn out to properly lift to strong and avoid injury. Hmmm, something I shouldâ€™ve read before trying to lift a heavy (to me) barbell over my head and above my chest.

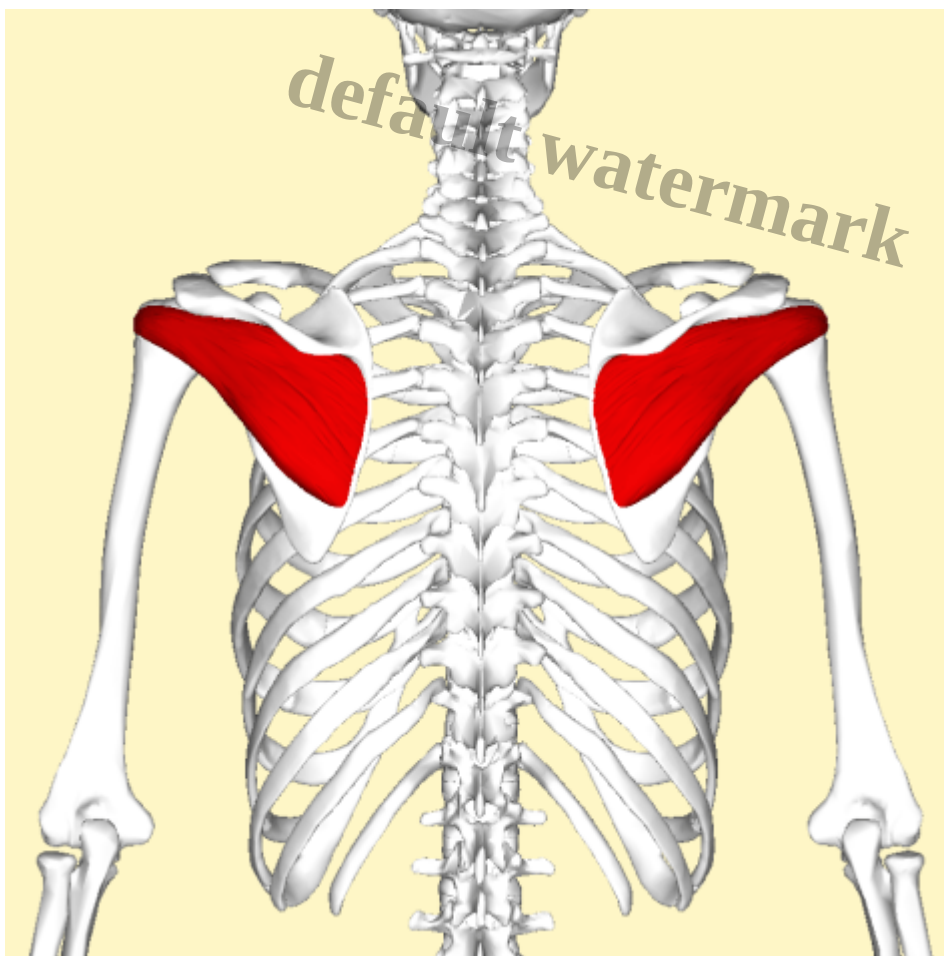
Last September, I [first wrote about my ailing shoulder](#) and how I assumed it was a rotator cuff tear. I still shoveled dirt and helped out with Going Momâ€™s [backyard landscaping project](#), but it hurt.

After being stubborn and still working out by following the [Squat Every Day program](#), I mentioned that I [finally went to a chiropractor](#) for my shoulder. After examining me, he diagnosed my injury as a strained rotator cuff. Who was I to question him? The shoulder area hurt, and rotator cuff injuries are pretty common.

Word of advice! get a second opinion. I went through several sessions with the bone-cracking chiro and never felt better. A good [chiropractor](#) will be able to identify issues and come up with a treatment plan that can really help you! At the end of 2015, I quit going and just went back to dealing with it. The pain was not so bad, but my strength and mobility was still severely lacking.

At the beginning of March, I went to the same doctor who saw me while we were trying to conceive for a wellness exam. Without mentioning my shoulder, he immediately noticed an abnormality on my right shoulder blade area. I could tell something wasn't right when his first words were "Oh my!"

His sound of shock and awe was not that of a glorious sight, but rather something hideous. I never considered anything on my back to be out of whack, and Going Mom never mentioned anything to me. Trust me, she'd let me know too! Within a matter of minutes, my doctor diagnosed what he saw as atrophy in my right infraspinatus muscle. I never heard of the muscle before that visit, so here's a diagram to help anyone not familiar.



The red indicates the left and right infraspinatus muscles.

Here's how it looks on me. Notice the concavity on my right?

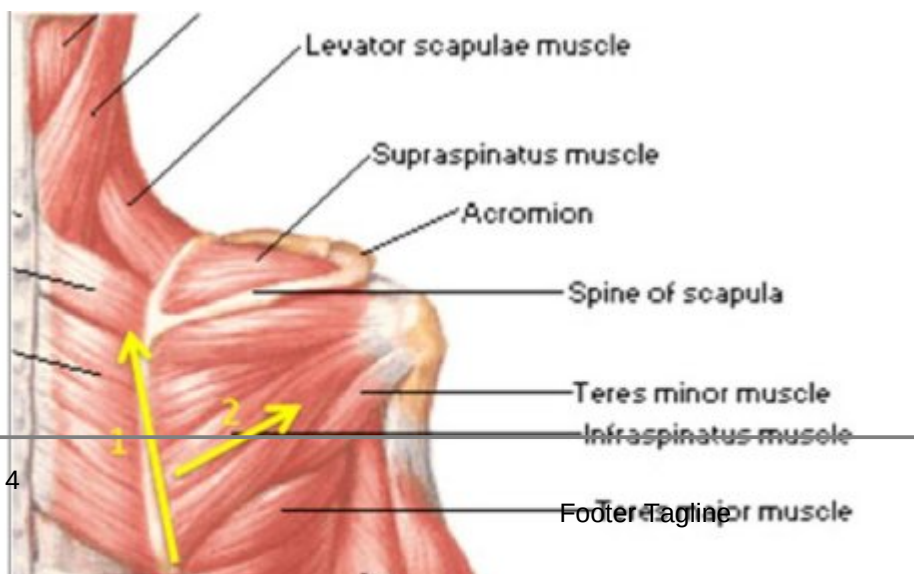


And flexed just to show how Iâ€™m â€œflexingâ€• nothing on my right side in one area because there is no infraspinatus muscle to flex!



So we know it's atrophy, but he wanted to know why and what from. I told him all about my ego getting the best of me when lifting, but that didn't seem to interest him much. Instead, I was sent to have a CT Scan of chest, an [EMG \(Electromyography\)](#) basically all over my body, an MRI of my right shoulder, and an MRI of my [brachial plexus](#).

I was given good reasons for all of these, but since each one was a separate visit, I became extremely tired of the process. What's more, after my doc sent me to see a neurosurgeon who simply stated she was not sure why I went to her and not an orthopedic surgeon, I turned livid. Even after asking to see all of the tests/scans I had gone through, they quickly said there was nothing they could do there unless I got *another* scan. No thanks.



Just another helpful visual reference

The neurosurgeon was my most recent visit as of writing this post. The EMG has confirmed my atrophied muscle was due to a damaged/entrapped [suprascapular nerve](#), part of the brachial plexus I had an MRI on, but no one has found exactly what caused that. Cmon, do they just not think that my heavy lifting reason is good enough?

They keep searching for a tumor or some other lesion inside when really, I'm just ready for surgery to fix the nerve or do whatever is done for this type of injury. At one point, my referring doctor simply stated I'd just have to live with it. Seriously, that's it? A little nerve entrapment can't be fixed nowadays? I'm calling BS. Not because I'm some know-it-all medical official, but because I'm a dad, and I plan on playing airplane and holding my sweet girl high in the sky whenever I damn well please!..or if she asks. ðŸ™,

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Yeah, like that. Sheâ€™s the only trophy I want or care about. Well, Going Mom too, but as far as kid trophies go.

I have "fired" my doctor and took it upon myself with the help from another doctor friend to schedule an appointment with an orthopedic surgeon. As of this post being published, the appointment is in 2 days, and hopefully I won't be sent to have a plethora of other scans, x-rays, MRI's and enemas (okay, probably not enemas) performed just to further confirm I have a damaged nerve causing my muscle to atrophy and it just needs to be fixed!

This really shows why it's so important to have a doctor that you can trust and that you believe in. You never know what might happen to your body, from exercise injuries like this to conditions that require your doctor's help with an [Immediate Threat Medical](#). Make sure your doctor is on your side.

For now, that's where I stand in the shoulder department. I'm still performing the fundamental barbell lifts, but can only do so much with my lack of a major muscle. Guess I keep hoping the nerve will just magically repair itself and I'll start getting stronger again. So far, no luck.

But, we have had luck in other areas. Our little two and half year girl is in full potty training mode and doing pretty good. She's already making "snakes" in the potty multiple times a day. Needless to say, we're proud parents.

**Have you ever dealt with or know someone who has dealt with atrophy?**

**Ever "fire" your doctor for something?**

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