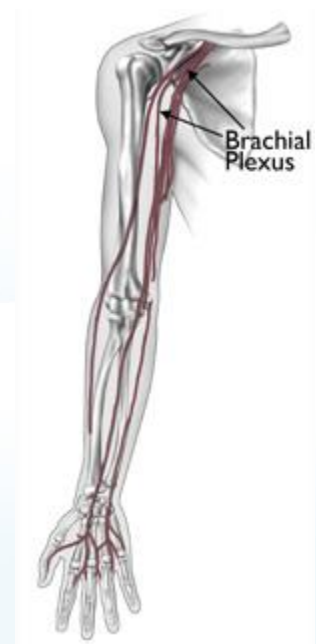


Burners and Stingers

Burners and stingers are one of the common injuries that occur in collision or contact sports. These are related to an injury of the nerve supply of the upper arm, either at the shoulder or at the neck. The injury garnered its name from the burning or stinging pain spreading from the shoulder all the way to the hand. This pain can feel like a bolt of lightning or electric shock shooting down the arm. In the majority of cases, stingers and burners are only temporary and the symptoms will go away quickly.

Burners and Stingers Anatomy

Nerves resemble an electrical cable traveling through the spinal canal and carrying any number of messages from the brain to the muscles. The nerves that provide you with feeling and movement to the arms end up branching out from the spinal canal in the neck. They all join to form a large bundle of nerves, which is known as the brachial plexus. The entire supply of nerves for the arms will run through your plexus.



How to Treat Burners and Stingers:

1. Remove from Additional Injuries

Most of the time, the treatment plan begins by removing the athlete from any further injury. Athletes cannot return to sports until all of their symptoms are gone. For some, it only takes a matter of minutes, but for others, it can take days for the pain to diminish completely. Anytime an athlete is suffering with neck pain or weakness, they shouldn't be allowed to return to sports.

2. Specialized Equipment

Depending on whether you have recurrent stingers or not, you might need to wear elevated shoulder pads or a special neck roll during regular sports activities. Some of the special shoulder pads are that of a cowboy collar, which is worn over the shoulder pads, or the spider pads, which are worn under the pads.

3. Physical Trainer or Therapist

Even though time can help to heal the injury, you might end up needing the assistance of a physical therapist to regain your strength and motion when you have symptoms that are lasting for a number of days.

Tips:

- Athletes engaging in contact sports are far more likely to struggle with a stinger or burner.
- 70-percent of all those who play American football in college will wind up struggling with a burner or stinger at some point in their four-year career. Rugby players typically sustain this type of injury too.

- Burners and stingers can be the direct result of a fall on the head. Football tackles and wrestling takedowns are both known to cause this condition. Tackling or blocking in football is one of the main causes of these stingers and burners. Linemen and football defensive players will often find they are suffering with this type of injury far more significantly.
- Beyond partaking in contact sports, small spinal canals pose a greater risk of contracting a stinger or burner. Even though a smaller spinal canal exists in those with spinal stenosis, that is not always the leading factor here.
- Most of the time, burners and stingers only occur in one arm at a time. The sensation can last for a few hours, but in certain conditions, it can last for days at a time. Symptoms into both arms/hands need more thorough medical attention and investigation.