

# Stretch injury

Damage to the upper nerves that make up the brachial plexus tends to occur when your shoulder is forced down while your neck stretches up and away from the injured shoulder. The lower nerves are more likely to be injured when your arm is forced above your head.

These injuries can occur in several ways, including:

Contact sports. Many football players experience burners or stingers, which can occur when the nerves in the brachial plexus get stretched beyond their limit during collisions with other players. Difficult births. Newborns can sustain brachial plexus injuries. These may be associated with high birth weight, breech presentation or prolonged labor. If an infant's shoulders get wedged within the birth canal, there is an increased risk of a brachial plexus palsy. Most often, the upper nerves are injured, a condition called Erb's palsy. Trauma. Several types of trauma — including motor vehicle accidents, motorcycle accidents, falls or bullet wounds — can result in brachial plexus injuries.

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