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Shoulder, Arm, Back Pain & Bra Fit

An *inappropriate* fitting bra or wrong type of bra can contribute to shoulder, arm, hand, back, and chest pain.

Guidelines for Bra Fit:

- The band around the chest should provide most of the breast support, the shoulder straps are primarily designed to assist & provide shape to the cup.
- The straps should NOT slide off the shoulder
- Should be able to easily slip/slide a finger under the strap as it goes over the shoulder.
- If, there are grooves, valley, & gutters on the shoulder it suggests the relationship between the band around the chest, & the cup is NOT appropriate. The band & straps are NOT working together & the straps are doing too much work. Take extra effort to select an appropriate size & fitting bra. Some stores have certified fitters trained to help you.
- The closer the strap is to the neck the less stress is on the shoulder/arm. The closer the strap is to the tip of the shoulder the more stress is placed on the shoulder/arm. Keeping the strap off the tip of the shoulder & closer to the neck may require a different bra back, either a *Y-back*, *U-back*, *T-back*, *leotard type back*, or *towed in back*.
- Breast tissue should NOT spill out from under or over the cup. Fatty tissue under the arms, is really part of your breast – keep it in the cup.

Shopping for Bra

- Choose a store, which has a greater likelihood of having a trained fitter. Call ahead to identify the trained fitter & schedule an appointment. Bring your best fitting bra, plan on spending adequate time.
- Request that you be measured for correct size. Your bra size can change as a result of weight gain or fitness level.
- Discuss with the fitter/sales person the advantages & disadvantages of under-wire; front closure, back closure; features to decrease stress on arm/shoulder; features to decrease stress on the back.
- It is unlikely a single bra type will meet all of your needs. A variety of bra types might be something to consider.