

## Diseases of the periarticular sacs due to pressure

### Definition of causal agent

Inflammation of a bursae may occur as a result of several causes.

*Occupational bursitis* may be caused by trauma, chronic overuse, pressure, friction, awkward posture. The friction type of bursitis may be related to excessive friction associated with specific occupations, for example, prepatellar bursitis is typical for home cleaners (housemaids), carpet layers, roofers, coal miners; olecranon bursitis – for draughtsmen, engravers, polishers, watchmakers; ischial bursitis – for weavers (weaver's bottom). *Sports* that can cause bursitis include jogging, tennis and squash.

Occupational diseases of the periarticular sacs caused by mechanical pressure are called **bursitis**.

## Bursitis

### Definition

Acute or chronic inflammation of a bursa. Bursitis does not cause joint deformity but can cause significant pain and restrict movement.

Most bursitis occurs in the olecranon, shoulder, knee, but other common forms exist: calcaneal (Achilles), iliopectineal (iliopsoas), ischial and trochanteric.

### Other causes

*Infective and septic bursitis* may be caused by acute or chronic infection by a wide range of organisms, most commonly *Staphylococcus aureus*.

Bursitis may also occur as a result of *systemic diseases*, such as rheumatoid arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis, scleroderma.

*Degenerative changes and calcification* in a subjacent tendon may irritate the overlying bursa and cause bursitis e.g. Subacromial bursitis secondary to calcific supraspinatus, gout.

### Diagnostic criteria

- Occupational history which confirms exposure. A detailed interview of the job tasks, which is essential to understand the work nature and its possible relation to bursitis.
- Clinical symptoms. The main symptoms include pain and tenderness around joints and may include stiffness of the joint with the pain often being most severe at night (see also symptoms at different forms of bursitis).
- Physical symptoms (see different forms of bursitis).
- Laboratory investigations and Xrays are used primarily to exclude other conditions.