

## Let's Talk About...Release Pain

By Ben Benjamin, PhD

**True or False:** The supraspinatus muscle-tendon unit is injured if pain is felt on the release of resisted abduction.

**Answer:** False. When the supraspinatus muscle-tendon unit is injured, pain must be felt while performing resisted abduction - not when the person releases the push.

It is therefore important to ask the client if he or she feels pain while pushing or upon release of the resisted action. This same principle holds true for any resisted test in the body. Resisted tests are used to assess muscle/tendon injuries. Pain must be felt while the test is being performed, not when the person releases.

In the case of resisted abduction, the anterior and posterior stabilizers of the shoulder and the subscapularis and infraspinatus muscle-tendon units are under tension to stabilize the shoulder. When there is pain on the release of resisted abduction, the injury is generally one of these two stabilizing muscle-tendon units. This is borne out clinically and is understood to be caused by the sudden change in tension on the stabilizing tendon.

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