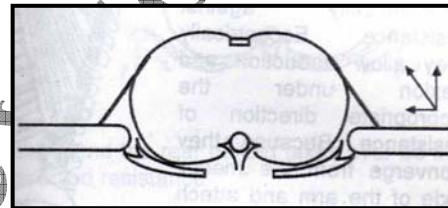
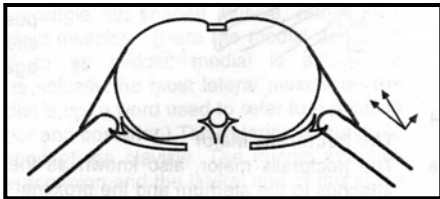




# Better Bench Press without Shoulder Pain!

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This is written to give you a better understanding of why most people touch the bar to the chest and why many people shouldn't. Determining the goal will play a major part in determining which distance to move.



- The history of **Bench Pressing** was based on the sport of power lifting which states that the bar must touch the chest in order to count as a repetition. The difference between power lifters and most people are rib cage thickness and shorter forearms which gives the powerlifters the **mechanical advantage**. If you just thought in terms of relative distance moved, the normal person would have to move a greater distance in order to touch the chest, thus giving the powerlifters the edge.
- If the goal is normal function and strength, the scapulae should be allowed to move as needed for the range, without exaggeration or restriction to their motion.
- If a synthetic or nonfunctional goal is chosen, such as hypertrophy or powerlifting, some degree of retraction may be required. Pectoralis major involvement can be enhanced for goals such as hypertrophy by maintaining some degree of retraction.
- **ROM** during the lowering phase should be based not only upon the individual's structure and ability, but also upon the amount of load applied at the various points in the ROM via the resistance profile.
- Because our joints move in a **rotatory motion**, torque is really what we should always refer to when we discuss the total effects of a muscular force or resistance on the body
- The two most important factors to consider when avoiding shoulder injuries are **Active Insufficiency** (least amount of cross-bridging recruitment) and **force angle** which now produces great **translatory forces than rotational forces**, which will create stress on the anterior joint capsule of the shoulder.
- Ironically, **NSCA** which is considered the leader in strength and conditioning still use the protocol of touching the bar to the chest for each person without regards to individual anatomical structure.