

ANATOMY OF THE UPPER BACK, CHEST, SHOULDERS, ARMS AND HANDS

The upper back, chest, shoulders, arms and hands depict how we feel about ourselves, others and our life. If we allow the weight of the world to set on our shoulders, or we feel the need to protect our hearts or if we difficulty giving and/or receiving love this shows up in this space physically.

Our shoulders round forward, our hands and arms are clamped tightly to our chests, one shoulder is lifted higher than another, we have kyphosis or difficulty taking breath into the chest. This is the space of love. Look around you, most everyone is in some form of love avoidance/fear.

Yoga is an amazing practice for opening the heart. The heart doesn't respond to force. It likes to move slow and open like a flower blooming one petal at a time.

The anatomy of the bones and joints of the upper back, chest, shoulders, arms and hands

Find your collar bone or **clavicle**. Trace the clavicle in toward the neck until you fall into a rounded out half circle. This is the jugular notch or the **manubrium of the sternum**. Walk you fingers down to the "V" of the ribs feeling the **sternum**.

Trace the clavicle out to the point where it connects with the **acromion**, the highest point of the shoulder. Trace your fingers until they fall off the acromion. Swing your arm back and forth and feel the head of the **humerus** moving back and forth. This is the **glenohumeral joint** the primary joint of the shoulder.

Find your acromion again. This is the top of the **scapula**. Shrug your shoulders up and down and in and out, feel the scapula moving.

Come to a wall and take your legs up the wall. Bend your knees and press your feet into the wall lifting your bottom. Come up to the tops of your shoulders and feel **cervical vertebra 7** the big bump at the bottom of your neck. Slowly, lower your bottom to feel the next vertebra down toward the tail. Keep releasing slowly down feeling each vertebra down to **T12**.

Sit and take you hand down the upper arm bone, the humerus. The distal end of the humerus meets the **radius** and the **ulna** at the elbow joint which is really three joints. The **proximal radioulnar joint, the humeroulnar joint** and the **radiohumeral joint**. Open and close the elbow and notice this joint only flexes and extends.

On the little finger side of the hand trace the ulna down to the wrist. From the thumb side of wrist, feel the shape of the radius and trace the bone up to its connection at the elbow. Trace the space between the radius and the ulna down to the wrist.

Hold your wrist with your opposite hand and move the wrist around. You are feeling the wrist joint or the **radiocarpal joint**. The bones of the wrist are called the **carpals**. This joint moves by gliding.

Trace the bones below the wrist to the knuckles. These are the **metacarpals**. In between the metacarpals we find the **intermetacarpal joint**. The bony knuckle at the back of the hand is the **metacarpophalangeal joint**.

Trace the bone up the fingers. These are the **phalanges**. The knuckle and midway up the finger is the **interphalangeal joint**. This joint only flexes and extends.