A low tone hemiplegic arm is susceptible to injury. Vulnerable tissues may be stretched, torn or inflamed. These injuries directly impact potential functional recovery of the hemiplegic arm.

Poor handling and poor positioning in the bed and wheelchair are key contributors to pain and potentially of subluxation of the hemiplegic shoulder. Pain can become chronic and difficult to treat. Subluxation is not correctable.

PREVENTION IS THE KEY!!

What can you do as a nurse?

1. During bathing and dressing, support the hemiplegic arm and move the joints slowly and gently.
2. Never pull on the hemiplegic arm to help roll or sit up your patient.
3. Do not lift the entire weight of their arm by lifting only their hand, support upper arm and wrist.
4. Never lift through their axilla, you are asking an unprotected joint to support body weight.
5. Always transfer using a transfer belt.
6. Apply a sling correctly to support the weight of their hemiplegic arm before standing and transferring.