

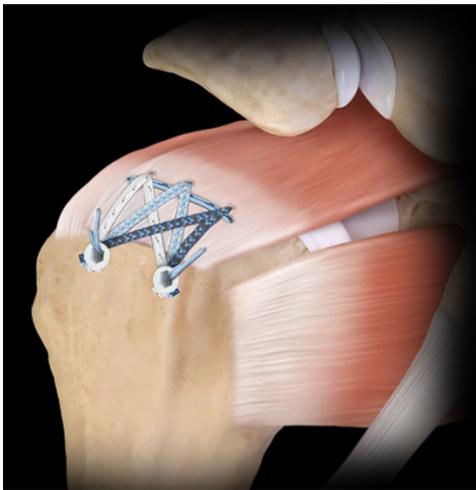
Patient Education Guide

Rotator Cuff Tear and Repair

WHAT IS A ROTATOR CUFF TEAR?

The rotator cuff is a group of four muscles and tendons that help keep the shoulder joint in place and allow you to move your arm and shoulder. Sometimes these tendons can become injured through a direct injury or overuse and from wear and tear. The degree of injury is on a spectrum and ranges from general inflammation, partial tearing, and full thickness tears. This can involve one or some or all of the four tendons. The type and size of the tear will determine which treatment options are available.

HOW IS AN ARTHROSCOPIC REPAIR PERFORMED?



Dr. Mathur performs rotator cuff repairs arthroscopically. *Arthroscopy* is a minimally invasive surgery that involves multiple small incisions around the joint. A camera and small instruments are placed through the incisions and displayed on a high definition monitor. This minimally invasive approach leads to less postoperative pain, faster healing and faster recovery.

The first step is identifying the status of the biceps tendon. If the biceps tendon shows signs of tearing or inflammation it will be addressed with a *biceps tenodesis*. This involves cutting and removing the damaged portion and reattaching it to the arm bone. Sometimes it will not be able to be reattached and is left disconnected – this is called a *biceps tenotomy*. The results from either procedure are the same.

Next the tear in the rotator cuff tendon is evaluated and secured back to the arm bone with a combination of sutures and anchors. The anchors can be made of suture material, plastic or metal and go into the bone and are permanent.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT?

BEFORE SURGERY

- Our office will contact you to book your surgical date, preop appointment, and first post op appointment.
- You will receive a call from preadmission testing. They will set up your preop labs and go through which medications to take and bring.

- The hospital will call between 1-5pm the day before your surgery to give you an arrival time and tell you if your surgery will be in the main building or in the ambulatory surgery pavilion (ASP).
- You may need medical clearance from your primary care doctor or cardiologist.
- Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before your surgery. You may take some sips of water with medicine.

MORNING OF SURGERY

- Arrive at the hospital at your instructed time.
- A family member or friend is allowed to come with you to help with the check in process and there is an area for them to wait while you are in surgery. You will require someone to take you home if you are leaving the same day of surgery.
- Dr. Mathur will meet you in the preoperative area to answer any questions and go through the plan.
- You will meet the surgical assistants and nurses that will be in the operating room.
- You will meet the anesthesia team, and they will go over their plan which often includes a nerve block to help with pain after surgery.

AFTER SURGERY

- Most patients will go home the same day of surgery.
- For the first few hours after surgery, you will be in the recovery unit where a nurse and the anesthesia team will monitor you and manage your postoperative pain.
- Once you are awake and comfortable you will be allowed to go home with a family member or friend.
- Keep your bandages clean and dry. This may require using plastic wrap or taking sponge baths.
- It is ok to change the bandages if they get dirty. We will change them at the first postoperative appointment.
- Stay on a constant pain medicine regimen. The effects of the nerve block wear off 12-24 hours after surgery, and it is important to stay ahead of the pain.
- Read your discharge instructions from surgery to learn what you can and cannot do.

FOLLOW UP AND PHYSICAL THERAPY

- Your first follow up appointment is usually 3-14 days after surgery.
- At this visit we will check your incision and determine when to start physical therapy.
- If you are allowed to begin physical therapy, you will be given specific instructions to share with the therapist for your postoperative protocol.
- We will book your next postoperative appointment which is usually 4-6 weeks later.