

## Rotator Cuff Repair FAQ

Andrew Schmiesing, MD | P: 651-439-8807

### WHAT IS THE ROTATOR CUFF?

- The rotator cuff is a group of four muscles that helps to move the shoulder
- It is commonly painful and occasionally, the tendon tears
- Rotator cuff tears can be traumatic after a fall, or degenerative with wear and tear over time
- Most rotator cuff tears occur in patients over 50 years old

### IS SURGERY REQUIRED FOR A ROTATOR CUFF TEAR?

- No, non-operative treatment is often recommended depending on the type of tear and patient factors
- Some patients will be offered surgery prior to non-operative management because rotator cuff tears can progress and get worse

### CAN ALL ROTATOR CUFF TEARS BE REPAIRED?

- No, sometimes rotator cuff tears are not repairable
- If a rotator cuff tear is not repairable there may be some other surgical options if non operative treatment fails

### HOW IS THE ROTATOR CUFF REPAIRED?

- Most rotator cuff repairs are done arthroscopically, with small incisions, a camera, and special equipment
- Rarely, certain types of rotator cuff tears may be repaired with an open approach
- Bone anchors and sutures are then used to physically repair the tendon back onto bone

### WHERE WILL MY SURGERY TAKE PLACE?

- One of a few locations:
  - Surgery center: High Pointe
  - Hospital: Woodwinds or Osceola Medical Center

### WILL I HAVE ANY RESTRICTIONS AFTER SURGERY?

- You will be in a sling for about 6 weeks after surgery
- You will do passive range of motion in the first 6 weeks
- Avoid moving the arm under its own power for 6 weeks
- Active range of motion starts at 6 weeks
- Strengthening will start 12 weeks after surgery

- It can take 5-6 months to return to full activity
- If you are given a sling in clinic, bring this with you to your surgery

### **WILL I NEED PHYSICAL THERAPY?**

- Physical therapy should start 2 weeks after surgery, schedule this before surgery
- You will work with PT for about 4-5 months after surgery

### **HOW WILL MY PAIN BE MANAGED AFTER SURGERY?**

- You will likely have the option for a nerve block at the time of surgery which can help a lot with pain the first night after surgery.
- It will be recommended that you take Tylenol (1000 mg 3x/day) and ibuprofen (600 mg 3x/day) around the clock
- Oxycodone, or another narcotic pain medication, will be prescribed to take as needed
- Please see the pain management FAQ

### **HOW WILL I MANAGE MY INCISION?**

- The surgical dressing can be changed 3 days after surgery. You may then shower, let soap and water run over the incisions, do not scrub. Pat dry and replace a clean dressing or band aids.
- Do not soak your incision until 4 weeks from surgery

### **WHAT TYPES OF THINGS ARE NORMAL AFTER SURGERY?**

- Pain after rotator cuff surgery is normal. It can linger for a few of weeks.
- Swelling in the shoulder for a few weeks

### **WHAT TYPES OF THINGS SHOULD I CONTACT THE SURGICAL TEAM ABOUT?**

- Fever over 101
- Drainage from your incision after the first few days
- Increasing redness warmth around your incisions
- Sudden increases in pain

### **WHERE TO GO WITH QUESTIONS?**

- If you have questions for the surgical team, please call Dr. Schmiesing's Care Coordinator at 651-351-2621.
- To schedule an appointment, call 651-439-8807