

ROTATOR CUFF INJURY

Adults Over 40 Are At a Higher Risk for Rotator Cuff Tears

Rotator Cuff Injuries Are One of the Most Common Conditions of the Shoulder

Are you experiencing shoulder pain at night or difficulty reaching objects overhead or behind your back? If so, you could be suffering from a torn rotator cuff of the shoulder. A torn rotator cuff weakens the shoulder, limiting daily activities. To learn more about this condition, along with treatment options, please read the following summary.

01 | Cause

The shoulder is a ball-and-socket joint that consists of three bones – the humerus, scapula and clavicle. Your arm is kept in place by the rotator cuff, a network of muscles that cover the head of the humerus, lifting and rotating your arm. If one or more of the rotator cuff tendons is injured, the tendon no longer fully attaches to the head of the humerus. There are two main causes of rotator cuff tears – injury and degeneration:

- Injury – falls, accidents or sports injuries can result in a partial or full tear of the rotator cuff
- Degenerative – lack of blood supply, repetitive motion and bone spurs increase the risk of rotator cuff tears

02 | Symptoms

Acute tears usually cause immediate, intense pain. You may also feel a snapping sensation and weakness during the injury. For degenerative rotator cuff tears, the most common symptoms include:

- Pain at night, especially when lying on the affected shoulder
- Pain when lifting and lowering your arm
- Weakness when lifting or rotating your arm
- Crackling sensation when moving your shoulder

03 | Treatment

Damage can increase over time, so it is important to seek medical care when symptoms develop. Early treatment can help to prevent the need for surgery and alleviate pain and discomfort.

Nonsurgical treatment options include OTC or prescription pain medication, strengthening exercises and physical therapy, and in some cases, steroid injections to relieve pain and inflammation.

In more severe cases, your medical provider may recommend surgery.

For more information on surgical treatment options, please visit:

<http://orthoinfo.aaos.org/topic.cfm?topic=A00406>

Did You Know?

Up to 30% of adults over 60 have a partial rotator cuff tear

References

<http://orthoinfo.aaos.org/topic.cfm?topic=a00064>

<http://www.webmd.com/fitness-exercise/guide/rotator-cuff-tear#1>

<http://orthosurg.ucsf.edu/patient-care/divisions/sports-medicine/conditions/shoulder/rotator-cuff-injury/>