



Want to know a little more?

Rotator Cuff Repair

The shoulder joint is formed by the humerus (upper arm bone) and the scapula (shoulder blade) and is supported by many ligaments and muscles.

The rotator cuff is a group of four muscles that attach from the scapula to the humerus. These muscles are essential for comfortable, normal movement of the shoulder. The tendon part of these muscles is located between the humeral head and the overlying bone (acromion) and attach onto the outside aspect of the humeral head.

The rotator cuff muscles can be damaged by a particular incident where a sudden force is applied to the tendon eg. catching a falling item.

Alternatively the tendons may suffer degenerative wear and tear over time, from repetitive activities, particularly if there is a bone spur on the undersurface of the acromion.

Management of a rotator cuff tear depends on which of the muscles are involved and the extent of the damage.

In some cases a program of strengthening exercises prescribed by your physiotherapist for the rotator cuff may be adequate to return to pain free activities. In more severe cases, surgery may be required to repair the tear.

Surgical rotator cuff repair involves stitching up the damaged tendon, removing frayed or damaged parts of the tendon and surrounding structures, and may also involve shaving of the undersurface of the acromion (see Acromioplasty information sheet).

Typically after surgery you are required to wear a supportive shoulder sling for up to 6 weeks. Your rehabilitative exercise program guided by your physiotherapist must be carefully planned to ensure maximal outcomes. The total recovery timeframe may be up to 6 months.

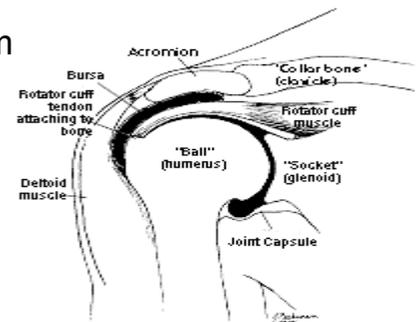
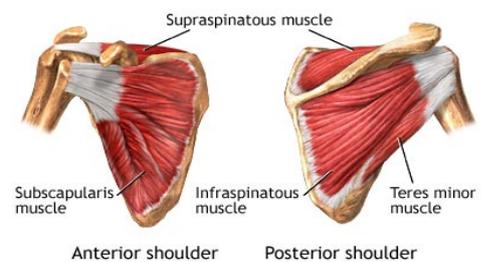


Figure 1

Rotator cuff muscles



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Disclaimer: The information on this page is intended as a guide only, and does not constitute advice or treatment. For further information, please see your qualified physiotherapist

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