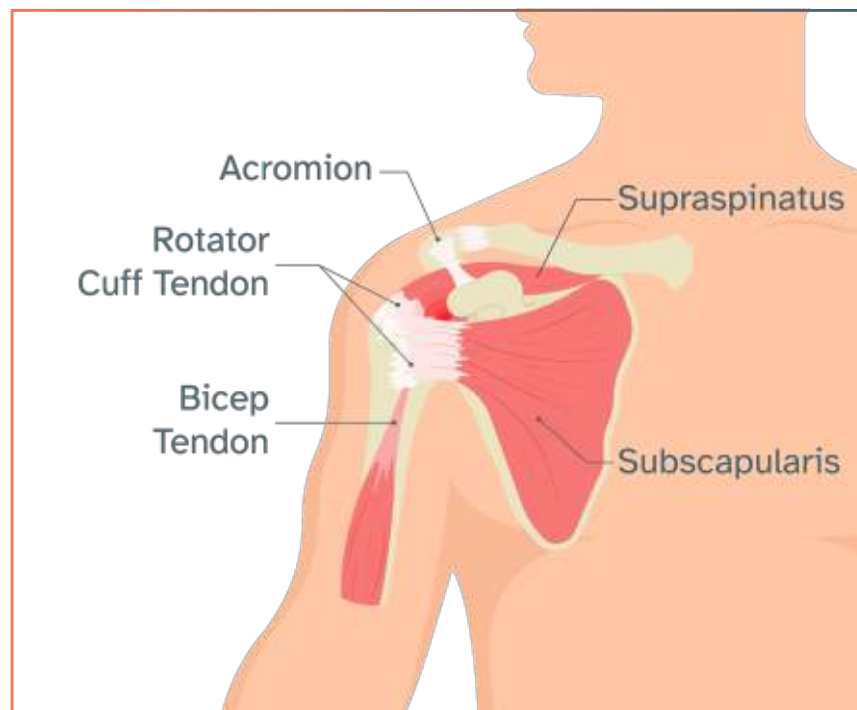


OVERVIEW

The “rotator cuff” is the group of 4 muscles and their tendons responsible for keeping the shoulder joint stable. Injuries to the rotator cuff are common—either from accident or trauma, or with repeated overuse of the shoulder. Risk of injury can vary, but generally increases as a person ages.

When left untreated, a rotator cuff tear can cause severe pain and a decrease in the ability to use the arm.



CAUSES OF ROTATOR CUFF PAIN

Rotator cuff tears are more common later in life, but also can occur in younger people. Athletes and heavy laborers are often affected. Older adults can injure the rotator cuff when they fall on or strain the shoulder.

SYMPTOMS OF ROTATOR CUFF PAIN

- Dull ache deep in the shoulder
- Difficult to comb your hair or reach behind your back
- Accompanied by arm weakness

TREATMENT FOR ROTATOR CUFF PAIN

Conservative care is sometimes all that is needed to recover from a rotator cuff injury. Initial treatments may include:

- Rest
- Cold Therapy
- Prescribed Exercises

Secondary treatments include:

- Steroidal Injections
- Physical Therapy
- Surgery

If conservative treatments haven't reduced your pain, your doctor might recommend a steroid injection into your shoulder joint, especially if the pain is interfering with your sleep, daily activities or physical therapy. While such shots are often temporarily helpful, they should be used sensibly, as they can contribute to weakening of the tendon and may lower the success of surgery if this is eventually needed.

EXERCISE 1: Shoulder External Rotation with Resistance



Instructions:

Begin in an upright standing position with your arms by your sides, holding a resistance band in both hands.

Bend your elbows to approximately 90 degrees with your palms up.

Slowly rotate your forearms out to the side. As you do so, pinch your shoulder blades down and back together.

Pause briefly, then return to the starting position. Make sure that you keep the bend in your elbows as you rotate your arms. Avoid shrugging your shoulders.

EXERCISE 2: Shoulder Extension with Resistance



Instructions:

Begin standing upright with your arms straight forward and palms facing inward, holding the ends of a resistance band that is anchored overhead in front of you.

Pull your arms down to your sides, squeezing your shoulder blades together. Then bring them back up to the starting position and repeat.

Make sure to keep your elbows and back straight, and do not shrug your shoulders during the exercise.

Important:

The therapeutic exercises described on this page are for reference purposes only and may or may not apply directly to your condition. Only perform the exercises assigned by your physician. By using this information, you understand the potential risks connected with activity in any exercise, physical fitness or training program.