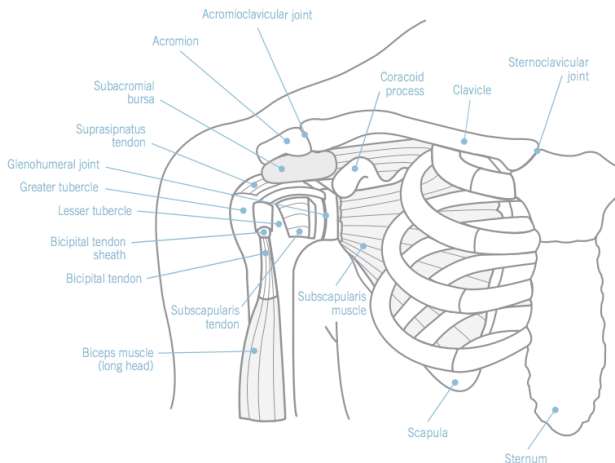


Rotator Cuff Tendonitis

What is it?



The rotator cuff is made of four muscles that narrow into tendons and attach to the ball-shaped humerus bone. These ligaments help hold the humerus firmly in the socket of the scapula, and allow the shoulder move with stability through a wide range of motion. Due to overuse, sometimes these tendons can become stressed

and inflamed. People who participate in overhead sports like weightlifting and tennis, or have a job that requires repetitive overhead arm motions are more prone to developing rotator cuff tendonitis. This tendon inflammation can cause pain when moving the arm in certain positions, lifting objects, and even sleeping on the inflamed shoulder. Another name for rotator cuff tendonitis is bursitis; the bursa is a fluid-filled lubricating sac that sits above the tendons. Bursitis, or irritation of this sac, often occurs simultaneously with tendonitis, and in general the terms are used interchangeably.

Treatment Options

Fortunately, rotator cuff tendonitis is a treatable condition that almost always improves with time and conservative treatments.

1) Rest: It is generally recommended that patients experiencing rotator cuff tendonitis refrain from any activities that hurt in order to avoid further irritating the rotator cuff muscles and tendons.

2) Anti-inflammatory medications: To help decrease inflammation, taking an anti-inflammatory medication like ibuprofen (Advil) or naproxen (Aleve) consistently for two weeks may be recommended by your doctor. Your doctor may also suggest a cortisone injection to help bring down inflammation and allow you to rehabilitate the shoulder more effectively.

3) Physical therapy: To help speed recovery and prevent the tendonitis from reoccurring, your doctor may suggest seeing a physical therapist. For many people, rotator cuff tendonitis occurs because there is an imbalance among muscle groups; the rotator cuff muscles cannot keep up and support the often-stronger biceps, triceps, and chest muscles, and consequently the cuff becomes overstressed and inflamed. A skilled physical therapist will help build up and strengthen the four rotator cuff muscles and eliminate this imbalance. To find a list of physical therapists located in your area, visit millsteinorthopedics.com.