

MAPLE CITY PHYSICAL THERAPY

Rotator Cuff Repair

Summary

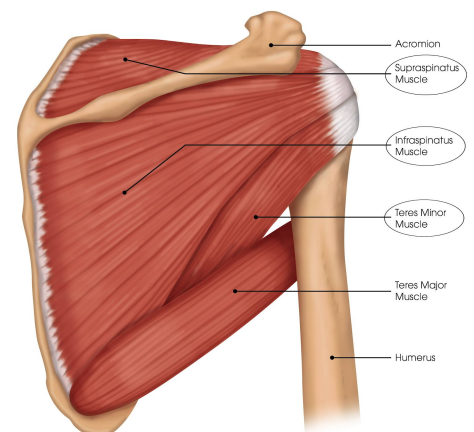
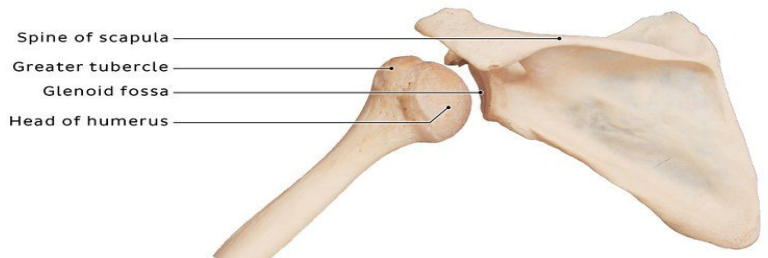
1. Anatomy
2. Signs and Symptoms
3. PT First
4. MRI/Surgery + Post-Op Recovery

Anatomy

- The glenohumeral joint (shoulder joint) is a ball and socket joint and can be thought of as golf ball on a tee
- The rotator cuff is made up of 4 important muscles that stabilize your shoulder joint
- These muscles start on the front and back of your scapula (shoulder blade) and insert onto your humerus (outer arm bone)
- These muscles work together anytime you move your shoulder to keep the head of your humerus (golf ball) centered on your glenoid fossa (golf tee)
- Injury can commonly occur with this group of muscles due to repetitive use and the heavy demand placed on them to stabilize your shoulder with most daily tasks
- A shoulder dislocation can commonly lead to a rotator cuff injury as well

Symptoms of Rotator Cuff (RC) Injury

- Pain
 - o Can be described as a dull ache deep in the shoulder
 - o Can be a sharp pain that is intermittent with certain movements
- Disturbed sleep
- Difficulty with your normal daily tasks
 - o Difficulty combing your hair and reaching behind your back
 - o Difficulty with overhead tasks and lifting tasks
- Arm weakness and loss of range of motion/flexibility



- Some rotator cuff tears do not have pain

PT FIRST!

Physical therapy is the first line of defense against an rotator cuff injury and often is able to fix the problem with no other interventions needed

What a PT will do for you:

- Get back your range of motion
- Teach you exercises to strengthen your shoulder muscles
- Improve the way you sit and stand (your posture) to help reduce pain
- Find a way to sleep that doesn't hurt your shoulder
- Teach you ways to carry objects safely
- Help you understand why you need to keep moving
- Help you find ways to do things so that they don't hurt your shoulder
- Get you back to doing all of your regular activities

MRI - Surgery - Post-Op Recovery

If the injury does not seem to be improving like your PT and MD would predict then an MRI may be warranted. If an MRI shows a tear of the RC then an orthopedic surgeon may opt to perform a surgery to repair the tendon.

- The typical recovery for a RC repair ranges from 6-12 months for full recovery
- Most people are back to their normal activities within 4-6 months
- Following surgery your surgeon will give you a list of precautions to follow and certain things you cannot do
- Commonly a shoulder immobilizer (sling) is used for the first 4-6 weeks to protect the repaired tendon
- Depending on the surgeons preference you will start physical therapy anywhere from 2 days after surgery to 4 weeks after surgery
- A course of PT following RC surgery ranges from 3-6 months typically
- Your physical therapy plan will be based off a "protocol" that the surgeon provides with specific goals and dates to progress exercises
- The physical therapy plan initially focuses on allowing the repair to heal and having the therapist stretch your arm in safe that ways to restore ROM

- When able your therapist will slowly progress you through safe strength exercises and back to your normal daily and functional tasks.