



# The Shoulder Center at Westchester Orthopedic Associates

## THE SHOULDER CENTER AT WESTCHESTER ORTHOPEDIC ASSOCIATES OFFERS ADVANCED TREATMENT OPTIONS FOR ARTHROSCOPIC SHOULDER REPAIR PROCEDURES

The Shoulder Center at Westchester Orthopedic Associates is now offering a new and innovative technology for use in the treatment of arthroscopic shoulder repair procedures. This new technology will simplify arthroscopic procedures that rely on knot tying for the closure of sutures during surgery.

The Shoulder Center at Westchester Orthopedic Associates utilizes this technological advancement to close off suture ends during surgery as opposed to the standard practice of knotting a suture. In addition, suture application using a knotted technique for tying off sutures causes a decrease of strength in the suture and occurs most frequently at the site of the knot.

This new technology, by eliminating the need for knot tying, saves time and virtually eliminates the risk of knot slippage or unraveling, thereby offering the surgeon and patient an efficient and optimal means of obtaining a secure shoulder repair, such as a rotator cuff repair.

The system being used by The Shoulder Center at Westchester Orthopedic Associates has been developed in collaboration with a number of surgeons representing

several surgical specialties in a joint effort with Axya Medical, Inc.

This collaboration led to the conclusion that the elimination of knot tying through suture welding is a cost-effective alternative to what can be a time consuming, tedious task while ensuring a superior surgical repair. Additionally, the Axya Shoulder Fixation System can be used in virtually any shoulder repair surgeries requiring suture knot usage.

As Dr. Louis McIntyre for The Shoulder Center at Westchester Orthopedic Associates states, "The Axya Shoulder Fixation System has revolutionized my arthroscopic procedures. It has ensured an advanced and secure repair, one in which I trust".

The suture welds produced by Axya Medical, Inc. exceed United States Pharmacopoeia standards for knotted suture. These products have received FDA clearance and are now being used in orthopaedic surgery. The Axya Shoulder Fixation System uses a patented ultrasonic technology that provides a no-profile advancement to old-fashioned standard knot tying.

*This newsletter is a component of the Axya® Shoulder Repair Alliance Program™ – a public awareness initiative to educate the public on recent advances in shoulder arthroscopy.*

# EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT SHOULDER ARTHROSCOPY...

## WHAT IS ARTHROSCOPY?

Arthroscopy is a minimally invasive surgical procedure orthopaedic surgeons use to visualize, diagnose and treat problems inside a joint. Arthroscopy can be used to repair injuries to the shoulder with less pain and a shorter recovery time than that required for open surgical repair. It also causes much less scarring.

The word arthroscopy literally means "to look within the joint." In an arthroscopic procedure, an orthopaedic surgeon makes a small incision in the patient's skin and then inserts instruments that contain a small lens and lighting system to magnify and illuminate the structures inside the joint. Light is transmitted through fiber optics to the end of the arthroscope that is inserted into the joint. By attaching the arthroscope to a miniature television camera, the surgeon is able to see the interior of the joint through this very small incision rather than a large incision needed for surgery.

The television camera attached to the arthroscope displays the image of the joint on a television screen. The surgeon can determine the

amount or type of injury, and then repair or correct the problem, if it is necessary.

Although there are many reasons for shoulder pain, a common problem for people over 40 years of age is a rotator cuff tear. The rotator cuff is comprised of the muscles and tendons that surround the top of the upper arm bone (humerus) and hold it in the shoulder joint. A tear may result suddenly from a single traumatic event or develop gradually because of repetitive overhead activities.

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Recurrent, constant pain, particularly with overhead activities.
- Pain at night that prevents you from sleeping on the affected side.
- Muscle weakness, especially when attempting to lift the arm.
- Catching and grating or cracking sounds when the arm is moved.
- Limited motion.
- May be triggered by a specific incident.

Your doctor will prescribe a treatment regimen based on your injury and your need for pain relief, movement and function. In most cases, the initial treatment is nonsurgical

and involves several modalities.

- Rest. If the tear is due in part to overuse, resting the shoulder may help.
- Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medications will help control pain.
- Strengthening and stretching exercises, as part of a physical therapy program, are recommended.
- Corticosteroid injections can help reduce pain but cannot be repeated frequently because they can also weaken the tendon.
- Ultrasound can enhance the delivery of topically applied drugs and has thermal effects that may also help in the healing process.

There are several surgical options to treat rotator cuff tears, depending on the size, depth, and location of the tear. If other problems with the shoulder are discovered during the surgery, they will be corrected as well.

- Arthroscopy, in which miniature instruments are inserted into small incisions, can be used to remove bone spurs or inflammatory portions of muscle and to repair lesser tears.
- In more severe cases, open surgery is required to repair the injured tendon. Sometimes a tissue transfer or a tendon graft is used.

## WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS?

Although uncommon, complications do occur occasionally during or following arthroscopy. Infection, phlebitis (blood clots of a vein), excessive swelling or bleeding, damage to blood vessels or nerves, and instrument breakage are the most common complications, but occur in far less than 1 percent of all arthroscopic procedures.

## WHAT TO EXPECT THE DAY OF SURGERY

Shoulder arthroscopy usually takes one to two hours. The length of the procedure will vary depending on the procedure and the extent of the damage within the shoulder.

After the chosen anesthetic has been administered, the shoulder is thoroughly cleaned, usually with an iodine solution.

- Two to three tiny incisions, called portals, are made around the shoulder joint, in the back, front, and side of the shoulder.
- The surgeon usually inserts the arthroscope through a portal at the back of the shoulder (just below the outer bony prominence at the back of the shoulder).

- Specialized surgical instruments are inserted through the portal in the front of the shoulder.
- Instruments are frequently switched from portal to portal throughout the procedure.
- In some cases, the surgeon will also make a fourth portal at the top of the shoulder.

The arthroscope projects magnified images of the inside of the shoulder onto a television screen. Sterile saline solution is run into the joint through one of the portals. It is necessary to have this fluid in the joint in order to see with the arthroscope. Specialized instruments are inserted into the joint through the portals, and the appropriate procedure is performed.

## RECOVERY AFTER ARTHROSCOPY

The small puncture wounds take several days to heal. The operative dressing can usually be removed the morning after surgery and adhesive strips can be applied to cover the small healing incisions.

Although the puncture wounds are small and pain in the joint that underwent arthroscopy is minimal, it takes several weeks for the joint to maximally recover. A specific activity and rehabilitation program may be suggested to

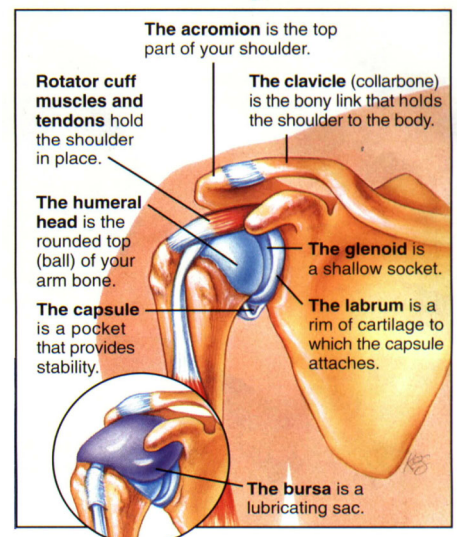
speed your recover and protect future joint function.

It is not unusual for patients to go back to work or school or resume daily activities within a few days. Most normal activities can be carried out within four to six weeks. Heavy labor and contact sports may be restricted for as long as six months.

Athletes and others who are in good physical condition may in some cases return to athletic activities within a few weeks. *Remember, though, that people who have arthroscopy can have many different diagnoses and preexisting conditions, so each patient's arthroscopic surgery is unique to that person. Recovery time will reflect that individuality.*

In more severe cases, open surgery is required to repair the injured tendon. Sometimes a tissue transfer or a tendon graft is used.

## Shoulder Anatomy



The Shoulder Center at Westchester Orthopedic Associates works closely with your doctor's office to schedule surgery at a time that is most convenient for you. We encourage you to carefully review and complete all of the paperwork and/or instructions provided by your physician. Several days before your surgery, our pre-operative nurse will call to review your health history assessment and the surgery process. You will also receive a call from our Financial Coordinator to verify your insurance information. If you do not receive these calls 48 hours prior to your surgery, please call us at 914.684.8700 (clinical) or 866.801.6903 (financial).

### **ARRIVING AT THE SHOULDER CENTER**

The Shoulder Center at Westchester Orthopedic Associates is located in White Plains, New York on Westchester Avenue, just off 287. Ample parking is available right out our door. When you arrive at the Center, please register with the receptionist. We will then begin your pre-operative process that includes a review of your medical forms. Please plan to arrive at least 30 minutes prior to your scheduled surgery to ensure adequate time to complete this process.

### **AFTER YOUR SURGERY**

You may experience drowsiness for several hours after surgery. Therefore, someone must be available to drive you home. Depending on the type of surgery, you may also require help during the first 24 hours while you recuperate. Your doctor will give you specific instructions about your recovery, and we will review them with you and your family members before you leave the Center.

### **GUIDELINES FOR SURGERY**

Below are guidelines for you and your family in preparation of your visit to The Shoulder Center at Westchester Orthopedic Associates. Additional instructions, specific to your surgery will be provided by your physician.

- Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before surgery.
- Take your regular medicines as directed with a small amount of water.
- You may brush your teeth. To reduce bacteria on your skin, bathe or shower before arriving, but do not apply lotion to your skin after bathing.
- Wear loose fitting, comfortable clothes and slip-on shoes.
- We are not responsible for jewelry, money or valuables, so please leave them at home. Bring any

co-pays or parking fees that are applicable.

- Do not wear contact lenses.
- Bring your driver's license, insurance card(s) and medical history form with you.
- Arrange for someone to drive you home and spend your recovery night with you, unless otherwise instructed.
- If you become ill, even with a minor cold, or take any new medication prior to your surgery, notify your doctor immediately.
- If you have an advanced directive or living will please bring a copy with you. We do not honor advance directives during your stay at The Shoulder Center at Westchester Orthopedic Associates, but it will be placed in your chart for future reference.



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