

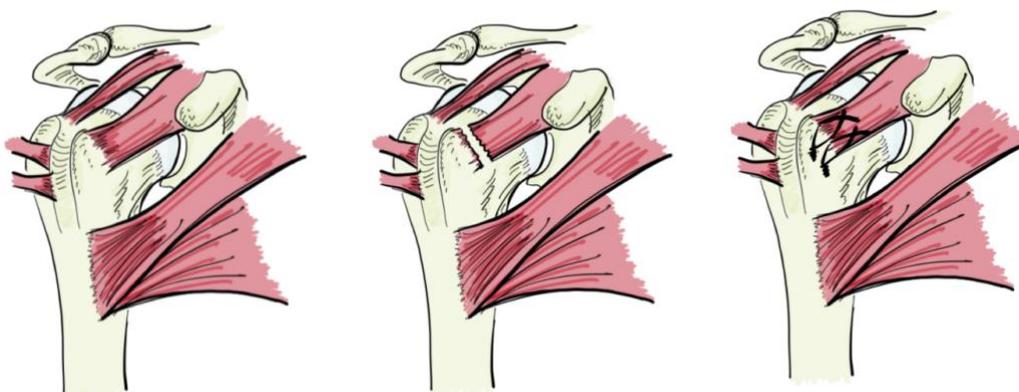
Surgery for tendons around the shoulder – the Rotator Cuff

[Dr Jarrad Stevens Home Page](#)

Injuries and tears to the tendons of the shoulder are quite common. Not all tendon tears will need surgery, some injuries will get better with time.

Rotator cuff tears can be managed in a sling. Physiotherapy may help you get good function of the shoulder. Some more serious tears may require surgery.

Dr Stevens will assess your injury and scans (MRI or ultrasound). If surgery is needed, Dr Stevens can help guide you through the process. A successful outcome will require a recovery period followed by rehabilitation with physiotherapists close to your home.



Normal Shoulder

Torn Tendon

Fixed with surgery

* If you and Dr Stevens decide that surgery is the best option for your shoulder injury, you will stay in hospital for day surgery or if the injury is associated with a fracture which is fixed, then an overnight stay following your surgery is normal. You will be discharged the next day with pain relief to take for two to three to days as you need.

*You will have a dressing on your surgery site which needs to stay clean and dry for 14 days.

* You can move your hand, fingers and elbow straight away, but wear the sling provided for most of the day. The sling helps to take the weight of your arm to let the shoulder rest.

*You can begin to gently move the shoulder a couple of days after surgery but do not carry any weight or lift anything during the first 2 weeks.

*After 2 weeks you will have an appointment with Dr Stevens to have your wound checked, any stitches will be removed. Dr Stevens will then give you advice on exercises and physiotherapy.

*Physiotherapy can be helpful to get your arm and shoulder moving and strong again, but do not start this until you have had your appointment with Dr Stevens at 2 weeks.

As with all surgery, there are risks repairing your torn rotator cuff muscles. These include infection, delayed healing or no healing of the tendon. Difficulty with pain and range of movement may also occur.

Rehabilitation following surgery to repair tendons of the shoulder

STAGE 0 (0-2 weeks)

Pendular type exercises can be started in the first 2 weeks after surgery:

This exercise allows you to gently move the shoulder and arm in a slow circular movement several times a day. It helps keep the shoulder moving so that it does not get stiff.

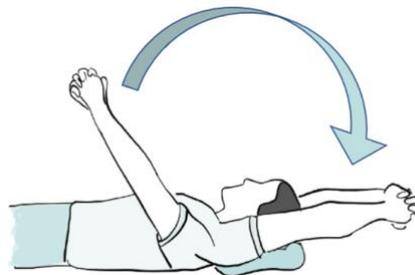


In the first two weeks do not lift your shoulder above 90 degrees or lift anything heavier than a glass of water.

STAGE 1 (2 - 6 weeks)

Lying down, clasp fingers together and use your 'good' arm to raise the 'bad' arm from your abdomen towards your head

Now try to raise both arms over your head and hold for 5 seconds

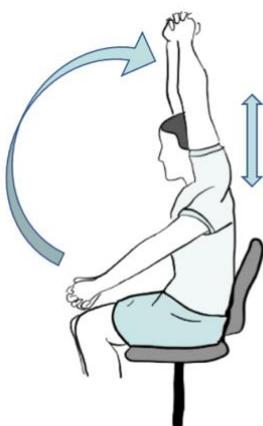


Complete 5 repetitions, 5 times per day

STAGE 2 (6 - 12 weeks)

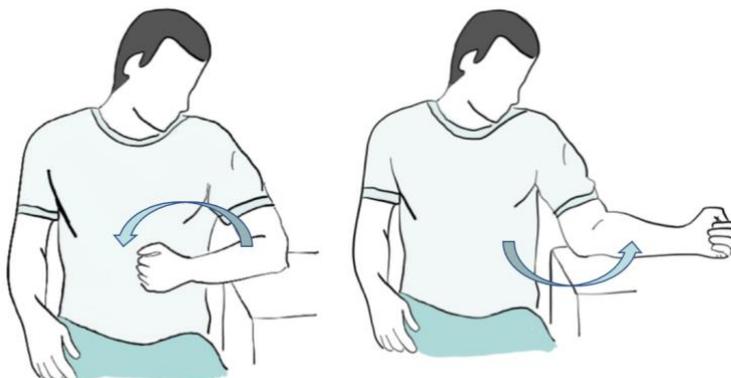
Start sitting in a chair, then progress to standing when comfortable

Clasp fingers together and place your hands on your head and rest for a few seconds



Now straighten your elbows and raise your hands above your head and hold for 5 seconds

Bring your hands back down to your abdomen, with your elbows tucked into your side resting on a flat surface, take your hands out as wide as you can and hold for 5 seconds.



Complete 5 repetitions, 5 times per day

STAGE 3 (12 weeks onwards)

Commence strengthening exercises as directed by your physiotherapist



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