

## HEMIARTHROPLASTY FOR CUFF TEAR ARTHROPATHY

### What Can I Expect?

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#### ***What is a Cuff Tear Arthropathy?***

Rotator cuff tear arthropathy (arthritis with a massive rotator cuff tear) is a condition that can cause pain and loss of shoulder function. This condition is characterized by the permanent loss of the rotator cuff tendons and the normal smooth gliding cartilage surface of the shoulder joint.

#### ***How do you replace the shoulder?***

The shoulder replacement will be placed through an incision down the front of the shoulder. The ball component will be fit into the center of humeral bone securely. This allows the shoulder to function more normally by creating a new smooth gliding surface for the shoulder joint.

#### ***Length of Stay***

This is an inpatient surgery and you will be admitted to the hospital overnight. Most patients are able to go home the next day after their surgery. You will need to have someone who can take you home.

#### ***Anesthesia***

Patients usually have two types of anesthesia for this surgery. The first is general anesthesia, which means you are asleep and unaware during the surgery. The second type of anesthesia is a nerve block which numbs the operative arm. The nerve block will last about 12-18 hours and during this period you will not be able to control your arm and it will feel strange to you. The anesthesiologist will speak to you on the day of surgery. The ultimate choice of anesthesia technique is up to you and your anesthesiologist and any other medical risk factors that you may have.

#### ***Incisions***

You will have an incision down the front of your shoulder. After the incision has healed, it is usually very thin and not very noticeable.

#### ***Pain***

All surgical procedures are associated with some discomfort and all patients perceive pain differently. In general, the pain associated with this procedure is well controlled with the pain medication that will be prescribed for you prior to discharge. After the nerve block wears off you will have discomfort which was not present initially after the surgery. Taking your pain medications as prescribed will help to ease this pain.

***Sling***

Your arm will be placed in a sling prior to leaving the operating room. When you go home you only need to wear the sling for protection, i.e. in a crowded area.

***Dressings***

You will typically go home with a clear dressing across the front of your shoulder. This dressing is waterproof and you can shower immediately after the surgery. Leave the clear dressing in place until your follow-up appointment. Most of the time we are able to use dissolvable stitches so that none will need to be removed at your post-operative visit

***Physical Therapy***

Before leaving the hospital you will be taught your home exercise program. For the 6 weeks of recovery you will do these very gentle stretches at home. Formal physical therapy will be initiated after that.

***Blood Thinners***

Typically, we ask that you take aspirin for a brief period of time (2 weeks) following the surgery to help prevent blood clots. While blood clots are not common following shoulder surgery, they can have serious side effects. If you have a history of blood clots, stronger blood thinners may be prescribed.

***Restrictions***

Recovery from total shoulder replacement is 4-6 months. During that time you will have temporary restrictions on the use of your operative arm. You may drive when you feel that you can properly control a car and you are **NOT** taking narcotic pain medication.

**First 6 weeks:** no active reaching and lifting, no closing doors, no reaching behind your back, and no repetitive movement  
**After 6 weeks:** progressive reaching, lifting, stretching, and strengthening  
**Long-Term:** no restrictions