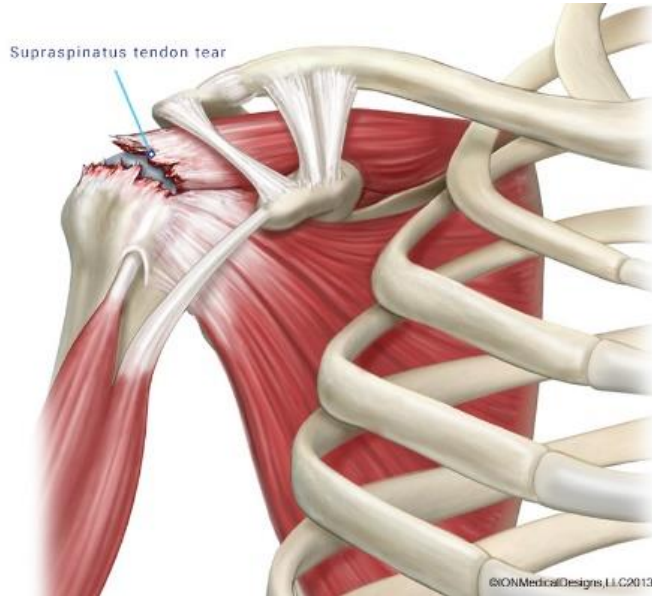


ROTATOR CUFF TEAR MANAGEMENT



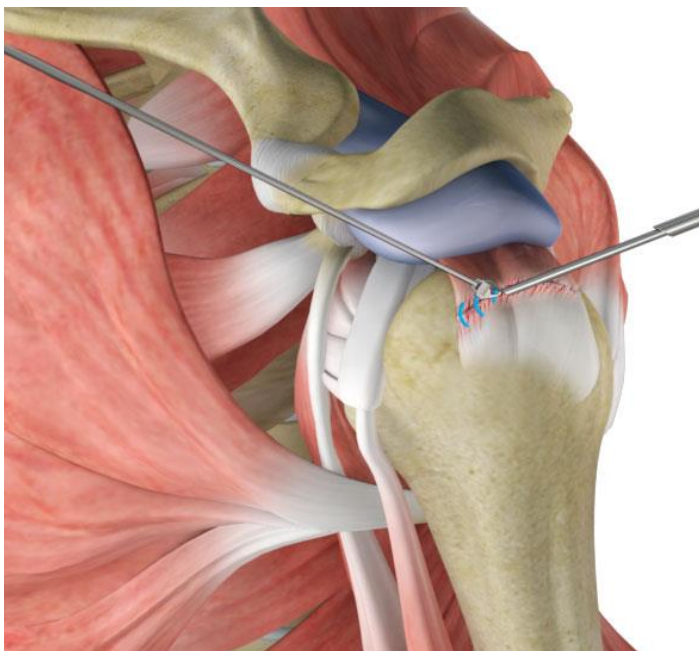
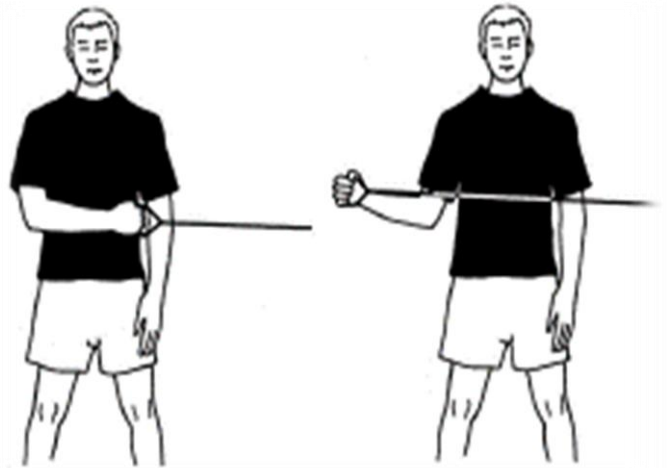
Rotator Cuff Tear

The rotator cuff is made up of four muscles which work together to stabilize the shoulder joint and keep it centered as you use your arm. The tendons that attach these muscles across the shoulder joint can become damaged due to a traumatic injury, degenerative changes or repetitive strain. A degenerative tendon over time can progress to a tear, or the tendon can be acutely torn from very forceful, sudden arm movements or direct trauma.

Management Options

Most people with rotator cuff tears can recover with **conservative management** with a physiotherapist, which involves progressively strengthening the rotator cuff muscles and tendons which can compensate for the tear and improving shoulder posture to minimise structural compression of the tendon. Tendons are very slow to respond to treatment so in many cases it can take months to reach a full recovery.

Surgery to repair the torn tendon is a last resort for people who fail conservative management.



Rotator Cuff Repair Surgery

Rotator cuff repairs are generally performed by key-hole surgery and can include additional procedures such as a bursectomy (removal of the bursa) and decompression (shaving of adjacent bone to create more space for the tendon). After surgery a sling is worn for 4-6 weeks to allow for healing of the repaired tendon. Initially only passive exercises are prescribed by the physiotherapist, which in the following weeks are progressed to active and light strengthening exercises. Timeframes for exercise progression and arm use can differ depending on the severity of the tear and the surgeon's preferences.

To achieve the best outcome postoperatively it is **crucial** to be compliant with the exercise program