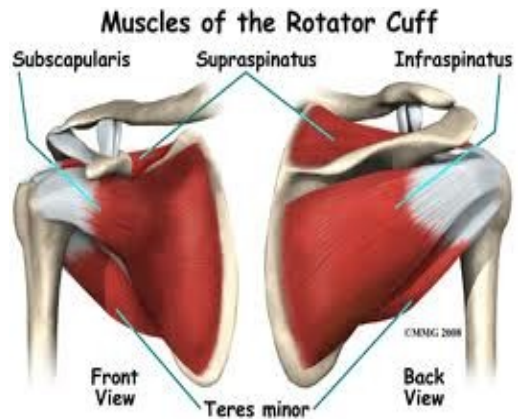


Rotator cuff tendinopathy or tear

What is it?

The rotator cuff is a group of four muscles which support and move the shoulder joint. A tendinopathy is a swelling and irregularity of the tendon, which can result from overuse, injury or degeneration of the tendon. A tear of one of the tendons can occur due to the weakened state of the tendon, or due to trauma to the shoulder.



What should I do to help reduce the pain?

- Icing for 15-20 minutes 3 times daily, or when the pain gets aggravated/worse
- Anti-inflammatories can help - ask your doctor about these
- Physiotherapy – your physiotherapist can help reduce pain by mobilising the shoulder joint and surrounding soft tissues, as well as providing you with exercises to help strengthen the shoulder and restore the integrity of the tendon

What should I avoid?

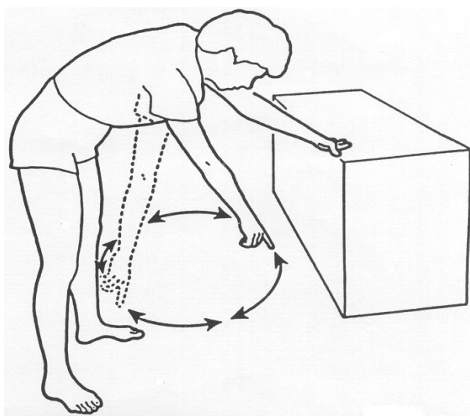
- Avoid any overhead activity as much as possible
- Avoid heavy lifting
- Avoid repetitive movements with the arm
- If you are working at a computer, make sure you are taking regular breaks to help reduce the pain

How long will I take to recover?

If left untreated, pain from a tendinopathy or tear can lead to worsening pain and more restriction of the shoulder's mobility. Once you have started the exercises prescribed by your physiotherapist, you should see improved pain and mobility after 6 weeks. Tendons are typically slow healers and can take up to 3-6 months to feel like they are back to normal. If the pain has not resolved, your doctor may want to send you for further investigations such as an ultrasound scan or MRI.

Exercises to maintain mobility

The following exercises can be performed to help relieve pain and maintain the mobility of your shoulder. These should be performed 2-3 times daily, and should NOT cause any further discomfort.



Pendulum exercises: leaning on the good arm, use gravity to gently allow the arm to swing. Perform circles and side to side movements. Repeat for 1 minute.



Matsen Fig. 2-32

Lying on your back, gently raise the sore arm above your head and lower back down. You can use your good arm to assist you. Repeat 15 times.