

## **Arthroscopic Rotator Cuff Repair**

### ***What is the Rotator Cuff?***

The rotator cuff is made up of four muscles and their tendons (Supraspinatus, Infraspinatus, Subscapularis & Teres Minor) that surround the shoulder joint. When you raise your arm the rotator cuff holds the ball (humeral head) of the shoulder within the socket (glenoid).

### ***How do you repair the rotator cuff?***

The rotator cuff will be repaired by making small incisions around the shoulder and by use of an arthroscope (camera) to see all the structures of the joint. Special instruments allow Dr. Acevedo to sew the rotator cuff back to the correct (anatomic) position.

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

This is same day surgery. You will need to have someone who can take you home. Your ride does not have to stay all day.

### ***Anesthesia***

Patients usually have two types of anesthesia for this surgery. The first is general anesthesia, which means you are asleep. The second type of anesthesia is a nerve block. Your arm will be numb and will feel very strange. The nerve block will last about 12-14 hours. The anesthesiologist will speak to you on the day of surgery. The ultimate choice of anesthesia technique is up to you and your anesthesiologist. It is normal for the hand and arm to feel "tingly" for up to 24 hours.

### ***Incisions***

You will have about 5 small incisions around your shoulder. They will only be about 1 cm long. The sutures are buried and absorbable. There will be small "Steri-Strips" on the wounds after you remove the dressings, and these will stay on for about 2 weeks. The steri-strips can get wet in the shower.

### ***Pain***

Rotator cuff repairs are initially very uncomfortable. You will have pain medication prescribed for you prior to discharge. After the nerve block wears off you will have discomfort. Most of the pain is related to your very swollen shoulder. That swelling will resolve in 24-48 hours. It is important to stay on top of the pain medication. Most patients receive Toradol, which is a strong anti-inflammatory. Begin taking this medication when you get home. The Narcotic you are prescribed should be used as a rescue medication as needed. For the first 2 days it is advised that you take 1 of these pills around the clock to stay on top of the pain. If it is too strong, you can take Extra strength Tylenol in its place.

### ***Sling***

Your arm will be placed in a sling prior to leaving the operating room. You are to remain in your sling 24 hours a day. This includes sleeping in your sling. Sling use is for 4 weeks after a Rotator Cuff Repair. This aids in healing. For the four weeks that you are in your sling, **you are not permitted to drive**. You can remove the sling to take showers and get dressed. Allow the operative arm to dangle at the side and avoid active lifting of the arm.

### ***Post Op Ice Therapy***

If you can obtain an Ice Machine Unit these are very helpful. **Please be sure to bring it in with you on the day of surgery**. Plan to use ice on the shoulder intermittently at least for the first 48 hours after surgery. You should use ice therapy on the shoulder for 15-minute increments throughout the day. Using ice therapy helps decrease pain and swelling. You can use it daily as needed throughout your recovery period.

### ***Driving***

You are not allowed to drive until you are out of the sling and you feel safe. This is usually about 4- 6 weeks post op.

### ***Dressings***

You will go home with dressings and gauze. You may shower after surgery as long as the TEGADERM dressing is intact. If the tegaderm begins to fall off it may be removed after 3 days. The actual skin incision CANNOT get wet prior to 3 days. After the dressings are removed, simply allow the water to wash over the site and then pat dry. Do not rub the incisions. Make sure your axilla (armpit) is completely dry after showering.

### ***Physical Therapy***

For the first month of recovery you will be immobilized in a sling. Formal Physical Therapy can begin after 4 weeks. You should set up your appointments with your therapists before surgery. You will attend formal physical therapy until you are about 6 months after your surgery. Physical Therapy is an important part of restoring strength and motion after a Rotator Cuff Repair. If you prefer home therapy, Dr Acevedo can prescribe you a program with the MyHealthTrack app.

**DR. DANIEL C. ACEVEDO FAAOS**  
[www.LAshoulderelbow.com](http://www.LAshoulderelbow.com)

---

1700 E CESAR E CHAVEZ AVE #2200, LOS ANGELES, CA 90033 PH. 323-264-7600 FAX 323-261-8027  
23502 LYONS AVE #202A, VALENCIA, CA 91321 PH. 818-788-0101x4451 FAX 818-788-4158  
18840 VENTURA BLVD #204, TARZANA, CA 91356 Tel. 818-708-3333 FAX 818-708-9643  
16530 VENTURA BLVD #100, ENCINO, CA 91436 Tel. 818-788-0101 FAX 818-855-2493

**Restrictions**

Recovery from rotator cuff repair surgery is 6 months. During that time, you will have restrictions on the use of your operative arm.

**Day of surgery to Week 4:** remain in sling, no use of arm, work restrictions, no driving

**Months 1-3:** opposite hand work only

**Months 3-4.5:** no lifting and carrying anything greater than 10 lbs and only occasional

over shoulder reaching

**Months 4.5-6:** no lifting and carrying anything greater than 20 lbs

**Pictures**

Dr. Acevedo will take photos during your surgery. Please bring those pictures to your first postoperative visit. Dr. Acevedo will review them with you and discuss exactly what was done in your shoulder.

**Follow Up Appt**

You should have had your follow up appointment made at the time of your preoperative appointment. You should be seen at around 10-14 days.

**DR. DANIEL C. ACEVEDO FAAOS**  
[www.LAshoulderelbow.com](http://www.LAshoulderelbow.com)

---

1700 E CESAR E CHAVEZ AVE #2200, LOS ANGELES, CA 90033 PH. 323-264-7600 FAX 323-261-8027  
23502 LYONS AVE #202A, VALENCIA, CA 91321 PH. 818-788-0101x4451 FAX 818-788-4158  
18840 VENTURA BLVD #204, TARZANA, CA 91356 Tel. 818-708-3333 FAX 818-708-9643  
16530 VENTURA BLVD #100, ENCINO, CA 91436 Tel. 818-788-0101 FAX 818-855-2493