



## **Sternoclavicular Joint Reconstruction**

### ***What is an Sternoclavicular joint separation?***

The sternoclavicular (SC) joint is where the collarbone meets the sternum (manubrium). The sternoclavicular joint is the main attachment for your shoulder girdle onto the axial skeleton. When the sternoclavicular joint is dislocated it can cause instability leading to abnormal movement, discomfort in the medial chest, and problems with swallowing and/or eating.

### ***How do you repair an SC separation?***

The SC joint will be repaired by making an incision across the medial clavicle and over the anterior center line of your chest. Dr. Acevedo a cadaver tendon to reconstruct the ligaments. The cadaver tendon is passed through bone tunnels made in the clavicle and the manubrium.

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

This is performed as an outpatient surgery. You will need to have someone to drive you home after you have been discharged. On occasion some patients may stay overnight. The surgery is usually performed in a hospital setting due to the need for a vascular and/or thoracic surgeon to be on standby.

### ***Anesthesia***

This surgery is performed under general anesthesia, which means you are asleep.

### ***Incision***

You will have an incision across medial clavicle and manubrium. It is typically about 6 to 8 cm in length. After the incision has healed, it is usually very thin and not very noticeable.

### ***Pain***

You will have a opioid limiting pain regimen prescribed for when you are discharged home. Typically you will be given Toradol, an anti-inflammatory to take for 3-5 days, Gabapentin a nerve pain medication to be taken for 2 weeks, and a narcotic medication such as Norco or Percocet to be used sparingly for breakthrough pain. **After a few days most patients are comfortable on ES Tylenol.**

### ***Sling***

Your arm will be placed in a shoulder sling with an abduction pillow prior to leaving the operating room. Sling use is for 6 weeks. You are to remain in your sling 24 hours a day. This includes sleeping in your sling. The sling can be removed to get dressed and for showers only.

### ***Dressings***

You will go home with a clear tegaderm waterproof dressing. Try to keep the tegaderm dressing on until your post op appointment. You may shower after surgery as long as the dressing is intact.

### ***Physical Therapy***

Physical Therapy will begin at 6 weeks after surgery. After 2 weeks You will be allowed to perform light exercises while at home. Dr. Acevedo will show you these exercises at the post operative visit. If you prefer home therapy, Dr Acevedo can prescribe you a program with the MyHealthTrack app.

### ***Restrictions***

Recovery from an SC separation surgery is six months. During that time you will have restrictions on the use of your operative arm.

**Day of surgery to Week 6:** no use of arm (Typing is ok ), out of work

**Months 1.5-3:** opposite hand work only

**Months 3-4.5:** no lifting or carrying greater than 10 lbs, only occasional reaching

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

**> 6 Months:** No restrictions. No Contact Sports for 9 months.

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