

Shoulder Arthroscopy

Associated diagnoses: Shoulder dislocation, SLAP tear, labral tear, Bankart lesion, internal impingement, shoulder instability, shoulder arthritis.

Definition: Shoulder arthroscopy is a procedure to address a variety of shoulder problems through small incisions and instruments

Anatomy: The shoulder joint is a ball and socket joint. It is the most mobile joint in the body and inherently the most unstable. This joint consists of the socket (glenoid), the ball (humeral head), support structures (the labrum around the socket and the joint lining), and muscle/tendon units (rotator cuff).

Affected Persons: Shoulder problems benefiting from arthroscopic surgery affect young and old alike. Younger people tend to have injury related problems such as dislocations, labral and SLAP tears, internal impingement and instability issues. Middle age and older patients are more likely to have rotator cuff tears and impingement.

Symptoms: Symptoms of shoulder related issues include instability or dislocations, clunking sensations, pain with certain positions of the arm or certain activities, and weakness.

Diagnosis: The proper diagnosis begins with a thorough history of the problem and a physical exam. Imaging studies are very helpful with shoulder problems and include x-ray and MRIs.

Treatment: For many problems, physical therapy, activity modifications and medications/injections are initially tried. Shoulder arthroscopy is the standard of care for certain problems and in those not experiencing improvement in non-surgical methods.

