

Bipolar Shoulder Arthroplasty for Rotator Cuff Arthropathy

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Purpose: To describe the results of Bipolar shoulder arthroplasty in patients with rotator cuff arthropathy.

Methods: Between July of 1991 and February of 1995, 33 patients underwent Bipolar shoulder arthroplasty for painful rotator cuff arthropathy of the shoulder.

Twenty-two of these patients have been followed for a minimum of 24 months (range 24-48 months) and comprise the study group. All patients had massive, irreparable rotator cuff tears and presented with preserved passive motion, good deltoid function and obliterated glenohumeral joint surfaces.

Results: Function and comfort were dramatically improved in all patients with an average increase in active forward elevation of 29 degrees and a gain in active external rotation of 39 degrees. There was one complication requiring re-operation at four years. Utilizing the UCLA and Swanson scoring systems, all patients were rated fair or better at an average follow-up of over 28 months.

Conclusion: The Bipolar shoulder arthroplasty is an excellent option in the surgical treatment of patients with rotator cuff arthropathy and the results compare favorably with the literature.