

Arthroscopic Rotator Cuff Repair with and without Arthroscopic Acromioplasty in the treatment of Full Thickness Rotator Cuff Tears

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Traditional surgical treatment of a rotator cuff tear by most surgeons involves repair with acromioplasty. However, an arthroscopic cuff repair without acromioplasty may offer the same degree of improvement as one that includes acromioplasty, but without compromising the coracoacromial arch. The possible result of a compromised arch would be anterior superior escape of the humeral head on attempted elevation. This prospective study examines the hypothesis that appropriate shoulder function can be restored through execution of the traditional arthroscopic cuff repair without acromioplasty.

Patients included individuals that were referred for assesment after 6 months of failed conservative management. Following informed consent patients were randomly assigned to receive arthroscopic rotator cuff repair with or without acromioplasty. The surgeon was not blinded to the type of treatment, however, the researcher who performed the follow-up evaluations and the patient were blinded to the surgical protocol. Both groups experienced the same post-operative rehabilitation protocol. Wound healing, active and passive range of motion and VAS of pain were assessed and recorded at 6~8 weeks post-operatively. Subsequent post-operative visits occured at 3, 6, 12, 18 and 24 months and included documentation of range of motion, the Constant and ASES scores.

Preliminary results suggest patients that receive a rotator cuff repair with acromioplasty demonstrate a statistically significant improvement (<0.05) in scores, compared to the non-acromioplasty group.