

ROTATOR CUFF

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO SIGNS, SYMPTOMS, TREATMENT AND PREVENTION

ROTATOR CUFF

Your rotator cuff is made up of the muscles and tendons in your shoulder. These muscles and tendons connect your upper arm bone with your shoulder blade. They also help hold the ball of your upper arm bone firmly in your shoulder socket. The combination results in the greatest range of motion of any joint in your body.

A rotator cuff injury includes any type of irritation or damage to your rotator cuff muscles or tendons. Causes of a rotator cuff injury may include falling, lifting and repetitive arm activities — especially those done overhead, such as baseball, tennis or swimming.

About half of the time, a rotator cuff injury can heal with self-care measures or exercise therapy

CAUSES

Four major muscles (subscapularis, supraspinatus, infraspinatus and teres minor) and their tendons connect your upper arm bone (humerus) with your shoulder blade (scapula). A rotator cuff injury, which is fairly common, involves any type of irritation or damage to your rotator cuff muscles or tendons, including:



- General wear and tear as you get older or participate in repetitive movement activities
- Tendinitis. Tendons in your rotator cuff can become inflamed due to overuse or overload, especially if you're an athlete who performs a lot of overhead activities, such as in tennis or racquetball.
- Bursitis. The fluid-filled sac (bursa) between your shoulder joint and rotator cuff tendons can become irritated and inflamed.
- Strain or tear. Left untreated, tendinitis can weaken a tendon and lead to chronic tendon degeneration or to a tendon tear. Stress from overuse also can cause a shoulder tendon or muscle to tear.

TREATMENT AND INTERVENTIONS

Most of the time, rest and exercise therapy are used as a treatment. Your doctor or a physical therapist will talk with you about specific exercises designed to help heal your injury, improve the flexibility of your rotator cuff and shoulder muscles, and provide balanced shoulder muscle strength. Depending on the severity of your injury, physical therapy may take from several weeks to several months to reach maximum effectiveness.

Other rotator cuff injury treatments may include:

- Steroid injections. Depending on the severity of your pain, your doctor may use a corticosteroid injection to relieve inflammation and pain.

(CONTINUED ON BACK)


Cardinal Glennon
SPORTS CARE

SSM HEALTH CARE – ST. LOUIS

ROTATOR CUFF (CONT.)

- **Surgery.** If you have a large tear in your rotator cuff, you may need surgery to repair the tear. Sometimes during this kind of surgery doctors may remove a bone spur or calcium deposits. The surgery may be performed as an open repair, as a mini-open repair, or as an arthroscopic repair with the aid of a small camera inserted through a smaller incision.
- **Arthroplasty.** Some long-standing rotator cuff tears over time may contribute to the development of rotator cuff arthropathy, which can include severe arthritis. In such cases, your doctor may discuss with you more extensive surgical options, including partial shoulder replacement (hemiarthroplasty) or total shoulder replacement (prosthetic arthroplasty).



ROTATOR CUFF

SPORTSCARE AT SSM CARDINAL GLENNON

Cardinal Glennon SportsCare is the premier pediatric sports medicine provider in St. Louis and St. Charles. We provide exclusive, direct access to comprehensive medical care for young athletes.

By working with multiple specialists and care partners, we guarantee your child will get the top care that is best suited to treat their unique injury, improving recovery time and outcome. Many of our services are offered in multiple locations so your child can even be treated close to home.

Specialists your child has access to through SportsCare include orthopedists, pulmonologists, cardiologists, radiologists, neurologists, emergency medicine physicians, adolescent medicine physicians, rehabilitation specialists, physical therapists, nutritionists and pediatric psychologists.

Partners your child has access to through SportsCare include SSM Cardinal Glennon Children's Medical Center, SSM Orthopedics, SSM Physical Therapy and SLUCare, the physicians of Saint Louis University.

We also keep kids in the game through educational programs and support for parents, coaches and athletes that focus on injury prevention, proper technique and overall athletic health. SportsCare is a young athlete's best connection to sports medicine and athletic well-being.

For more information about Cardinal Glennon SportsCare or to find a specialist for your athlete, call us at **314-577-5640** or visit us at cardinalglennon.com/sportscare.



Web | cardinalglennon.com/sportscare
 youtube.com/ssmcardinalglennon
 facebook.com/cardinalglennon
 twitter.com/cardinalglennon

Expert care for your young athlete by SSM Cardinal Glennon pediatricians and SSM emergency medicine specialists, 24 hours a day in the ER at:

DePaul Health Center
St. Clare Health Center
St. Joseph Health Center
St. Joseph Hospital West