

Arthroscopic Subacromial Decompression Surgery

What Is Arthroscopic Subacromial Decompression Surgery?

Arthroscopic subacromial decompression (ASD) is a surgical procedure used to treat shoulder impingement syndrome, a condition where the tendons of the rotator cuff become compressed and irritated as they pass through the subacromial space (between the acromion and the humeral head). During ASD surgery, the surgeon uses a small camera (arthroscope) and specialized instruments to remove any bone spurs, inflamed tissue, or other structures that may be causing compression of the rotator cuff tendons.

Do I Need Arthroscopic Subacromial Decompression Surgery?

You may be a candidate for ASD surgery if you experience persistent shoulder pain, weakness, and limited range of motion that does not improve with conservative treatments such as rest, physical therapy, and medications. Your healthcare provider will assess your symptoms, medical history, and imaging studies (such as MRI or X-rays) to determine if ASD surgery is the most appropriate treatment option for your condition.

What Are The Alternatives To Arthroscopic Subacromial Decompression?

Before considering ASD surgery, your healthcare provider may recommend trying alternative treatments, including:

- Physical therapy: Exercises to strengthen the shoulder muscles and improve flexibility.
- Medications: Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) or corticosteroid injections to reduce pain and inflammation.
- Activity modification: Avoid activities that exacerbate shoulder symptoms.
- Platelet-rich plasma (PRP) therapy or other regenerative medicine treatments.
- Lifestyle changes: Improving posture and ergonomics, weight management, and smoking cessation.

What Does The Operation Involve?

- You will be placed under general anaesthesia or regional anaesthesia.
- Small incisions are made around the shoulder.
- An arthroscope is inserted through one incision, allowing the surgeon to visualize the inside of the shoulder joint on a monitor.
- Specialised instruments are inserted through other incisions to remove bone spurs, smooth out the acromion, and release tight structures in the subacromial space.
- The incisions are closed, and a sterile dressing is applied.

What Does The Recovery Process Include?

Recovery from ASD surgery varies depending on factors such as the extent of the procedure, your overall health, and adherence to rehabilitation protocols. Generally, recovery may involve:

- Pain management with medications as prescribed by your healthcare provider.
- Physical therapy to restore shoulder strength, flexibility, and range of motion.
- Gradual return to activities and sports as guided by your healthcare provider.

Follow-up appointments to monitor healing and progress

What Are The Potential Risk Factors And Complications?

While ASD surgery is considered safe and effective for most patients, potential risks and complications may include:

- Infection at the surgical site.
- Bleeding or blood clots.
- Nerve or blood vessel injury.
- Stiffness or weakness in the shoulder joint.
- Persistent or recurrent symptoms.
- Adverse reactions to anesthesia.
- Rarely, failure to relieve symptoms or worsening of symptoms.