

Rotator Cuff Surgery

What Is Rotator Cuff Surgery?

Rotator cuff surgery is a procedure to repair torn or damaged tendons in the shoulder. The rotator cuff is a group of muscles and tendons that help lift and rotate your arm. If one or more of these tendons are torn — through injury, overuse, or wear and tear — you may experience pain, weakness, and limited movement.

Surgery aims to reattach the tendon to the bone and restore normal shoulder function.

When Is Surgery Recommended?

You may be advised to have rotator cuff surgery if:

- You have a full-thickness tear seen on a scan
- You've had shoulder pain and weakness for several months despite physiotherapy or injections
- Your tear was caused by a sudden injury
- You need a high level of shoulder function for work, sport, or hobbies
- You're experiencing sleep disruption due to shoulder pain

Smaller or partial tears may respond to non-surgical treatment. Surgery is typically recommended for more severe or persistent cases.

What Does The Surgery Involve?

Rotator cuff repair is usually done under general anaesthetic and often combined with a nerve block to reduce pain after surgery. Most procedures are performed using **arthroscopic (keyhole) techniques**, although larger or complex tears may require a mini-open or open approach.

During surgery, your surgeon will:

- Clean out any inflamed or damaged tissue
- Reattach the torn tendon(s) to the bone using anchors and sutures
- Repair any additional issues, such as bone spurs or impingement

The procedure typically takes 60–90 minutes. You'll usually go home the same day.

Recovery And Rehabilitation

After surgery, your arm will be placed in a sling for 4 to 6 weeks to protect the repair. Physiotherapy is essential for recovery and begins with gentle movements before progressing to strengthening exercises.

Recovery milestones typically include:

- Desk work: 2 to 4 weeks
- Light daily activities: 6 to 8 weeks
- Driving: 6 to 8 weeks (depending on pain and control)
- Sports and manual work: 4 to 6 months

Complete healing may take up to a year, especially for larger tears.

Risks And Complications

Rotator cuff surgery is generally safe, but as with any operation, there are risks. These include:

- Infection
- Bleeding or bruising
- Shoulder stiffness or frozen shoulder
- Nerve injury (rare)
- Failure of the tendon to heal or re-tear
- Ongoing pain or weakness

Your surgeon will explain your individual risks and how they can be minimised.

Will My Shoulder Go Back To Normal?

Most patients experience good or excellent outcomes after rotator cuff repair, especially when the tear is treated early and rehabilitation is followed closely. You may not regain 100% strength, but you should be able to return to most daily activities and many sports.

Early treatment and a structured rehab programme give you the best chance of success.

Why Choose Midlands Orthopaedic Clinic?

Our shoulder specialists at Midlands Orthopaedic Clinic are highly experienced in rotator cuff repair, using advanced keyhole techniques and tailored rehabilitation plans to achieve excellent results. We work with expert physiotherapists to ensure you're supported throughout your recovery.

Whether your tear is recent or long-standing, we provide a clear diagnosis, honest advice, and fast access to surgery where needed.

Get In Touch

If you're struggling with shoulder pain, weakness, or a known rotator cuff tear, don't wait. **Contact Midlands Orthopaedic Clinic today** to book your consultation with a shoulder expert.