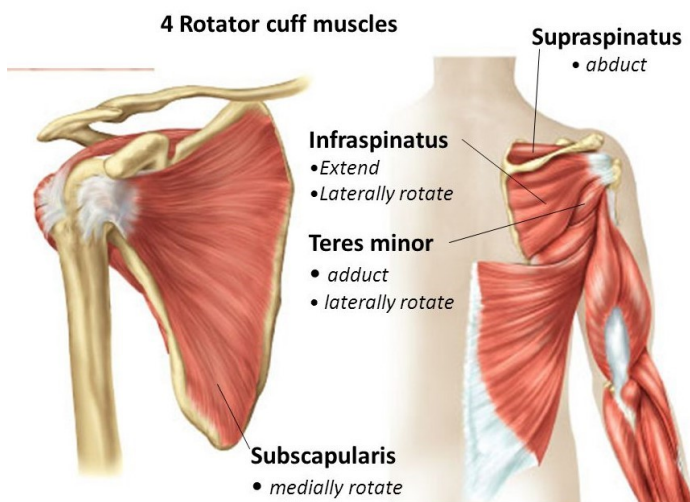


What is a rotator cuff injury?

The rotator cuff is made of 4 muscles that start from the shoulder blade, attach to the arm, and assist in controlling the movement of the shoulder joint.

Rotator cuff injuries are quite common and can occur at any age. The younger population is more likely to injure the rotator cuff through sport, due to trauma or overhead activities such as throwing, tennis or volleyball. The aging population is more likely to injure from overuse, as the rotator cuff muscles are very functional throughout life and in turn become overworked over time.



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Symptoms

Those with rotator cuff tendon injuries often present with:

- Shoulder pain and/or weakness
- Limited range of movement
- Pain that is often worse at night
- Aggravated by:
 - Lifting, pushing or pulling
 - Overhead activity/movements
 - Lying on the side
 - Reaching behind the back

Rotator cuff tendon tears often present with:

- Marked lack of shoulder range
- History of recent trauma
- May ache at rest

Diagnosis

Correct diagnosis of rotator cuff pathology is important as the rotator cuff muscles can be torn, acutely or chronically inflamed, or impinged, and management will differ based on which sort of injury has occurred. There are a battery of tests your physio can perform to make sure your management is guided in the correct direction.



Management

Initially, injury to the rotator muscles requires activity modification, and swelling management. As research around the shoulder progresses, it is becoming more common that these injuries are managed conservatively rather than surgically. While rotator cuff management can vary based on which type of injury has occurred, rotator cuff injuries generally respond well to a graduated loading program of strength exercises.

It is also necessary to address postural or biomechanical changes to ensure adequate mobility and loading of the muscles around the shoulder joint. Thoracic and neck mobility limitations may also need to be addressed as they can contribute to the demand placed on the rotator cuff muscles.

Book Now

If you have symptoms of rotator cuff injury, come in today to let one of our physios find the correct diagnosis for you and help you to improve your shoulder functionality, preventing long term degeneration and recurrent shoulder issues.