
After Reverse Total Shoulder Replacement

Reverse total shoulder replacement is a type of surgery. It's usually done to repair a complete tear to the rotator cuff, a previous shoulder replacement that failed, or arthritis of the shoulder. The rotator cuff is a group of muscles and tendons that hold the shoulder joint together.

After your surgery

After the procedure, you will spend several hours in a recovery room. You may be sleepy and confused when you wake up. Your healthcare team will watch your vital signs, such as your heart rate and breathing. Your arm and shoulder will feel numb if you had regional anesthesia. This will start to wear off over several hours. You'll be given pain medicine if you need it. You may also be given antibiotics to help prevent infection.

You may be in the hospital for 1 to 3 days. To help lessen pain and swelling, a cooling device may be used on your shoulder. You will likely have follow-up X-rays. These are to make sure the artificial ball and socket are in place.

You may start physical therapy in the hospital. This is to help you regain strength and movement.

Recovering at home

Follow all the instructions your healthcare provider gives you for medicines, exercise, diet, and wound care. Your arm will probably be in a sling for several weeks. You will continue to have some pain as you heal. But any pain you had from the rotator cuff injury and joint damage should be gone.

Continue to use the cooling device or ice pack on your shoulder as directed. Do physical therapy as directed. Limit the use of your arm and shoulder as directed. Your provider will tell you when you can return to normal activities.

Follow-up care

Make sure to keep all of your follow-up appointments with your surgeon and with your physical therapist. Most artificial shoulders last for several years before they need to be replaced. Talk with your surgeon about what they expect for you.

When to call your healthcare provider

Call your healthcare provider right away if any of the following occur:

- Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, or as advised by your provider
- Chills
- Redness, swelling, or fluid leaking from your incision
- Pain that gets worse
- Symptoms that don't get better, or get worse

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- Numbness or tingling of arm or hand
 - New symptoms