

Rotator Cuff Tear

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Situation: The rotator cuff refers to a group of muscles that provide stability to the shoulder joint and assist with elevation and rotation movements of the shoulder. The muscles extend from the shoulder blade and are attached to the upper arm bone by the rotator cuff tendons. During contraction of the rotator cuff muscles, tension is placed through the rotator cuff muscles and tendons. When this tension is excessive due to too much repetition or high force, damage to the rotator cuff, called a *rotator cuff tear*, may occur.

Causes: *Rotator cuff tears* often occur suddenly due to an excessively high force going through the muscle and tendon. This may occur during activities like heavy or awkward lifting, bracing yourself with an outstretched hand while falling, heavy pushing or pulling, or throwing too hard. Rotator cuffs also tear over time due to repetitive or prolonged activities placing strain on the rotator cuff.

Symptoms: People suffering from a *rotator cuff tear* will often experience a sudden pain or tearing sensation in the shoulder during the activity that results in the tear. People with a rotator cuff tear usually experience pain that is localized to the shoulder. Occasionally, pain may radiate into the upper arm, shoulder blade, upper back, or neck.

Treatment: Treatment options can include chiropractic care, acupuncture, physical therapy, and massage therapy. The chiropractor will diagnose your condition and determine what type of treatments and modalities are appropriate for you.