

OS18lite Total Shoulder Replacement

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This document will give you information about a total shoulder replacement. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

What is arthritis?

Arthritis is a group of conditions that cause damage to one or more joints.

The most common type of arthritis is osteoarthritis, where there is gradual wear and tear of a joint. Some other types of arthritis are associated with inflammation of the joints.

Arthritis eventually wears away the normal cartilage covering the surface of the joint and the bone underneath becomes damaged. This causes pain and stiffness in the joint.

What are the benefits of surgery?

If your shoulder replacement is successful, you should have less pain and be able to move your arm more easily.

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

Simple painkillers such as paracetamol and anti-inflammatory painkillers such as ibuprofen can help control the pain. Regular moderate exercise can help to reduce stiffness in your arthritic shoulder.

A steroid injection into the shoulder joint can sometimes reduce pain and stiffness. All of these measures become less effective as your arthritis gets worse.

What does the operation involve?

A variety of anaesthetic techniques is possible. The operation usually takes between an hour and an hour and a half.

Your surgeon will make a cut on the front of your shoulder and remove the damaged ball (head of the humerus). They will replace the ball and sometimes also the socket. The new ball is made of metal and the socket is usually made of plastic (see figure 1).

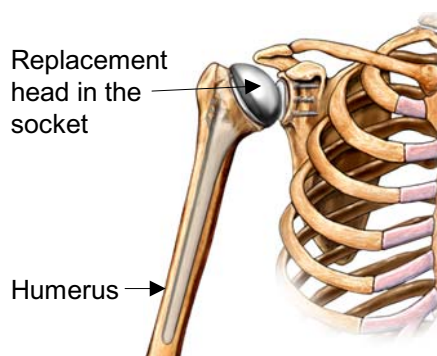


Figure 1
Shoulder replacement

The shoulder replacement is fixed into the bone using a special coating on the arm side of your shoulder joint.

What complications can happen?

1 General complications

- Pain
- Bleeding
- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Unsightly scarring
- Chest infection
- Heart attack or stroke

2 Specific complications

- Damage to nerves
- Infection
- Loosening
- Rotator-cuff tears
- Dislocation
- Stiff shoulder

How soon will I recover?

You should be able to go home after two to three days.

You will need to keep your arm in a sling to keep the tension away from your shoulder joint.

Regular exercise should help you to return to normal activities as soon as possible. Before you start exercising, you should ask a member of the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

Most people make a good recovery, have less pain and can move about better. An artificial shoulder never feels quite the same as a normal shoulder and it is important to look after it in the long term.

A shoulder replacement can wear out with time.

Summary

Arthritis of the shoulder can cause severe pain, stiffness and disability. A shoulder replacement should reduce your pain and help you move your shoulder more easily.

Acknowledgements

Author: Prof. John Stanley MCh Orth FRCS (Ed.)
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