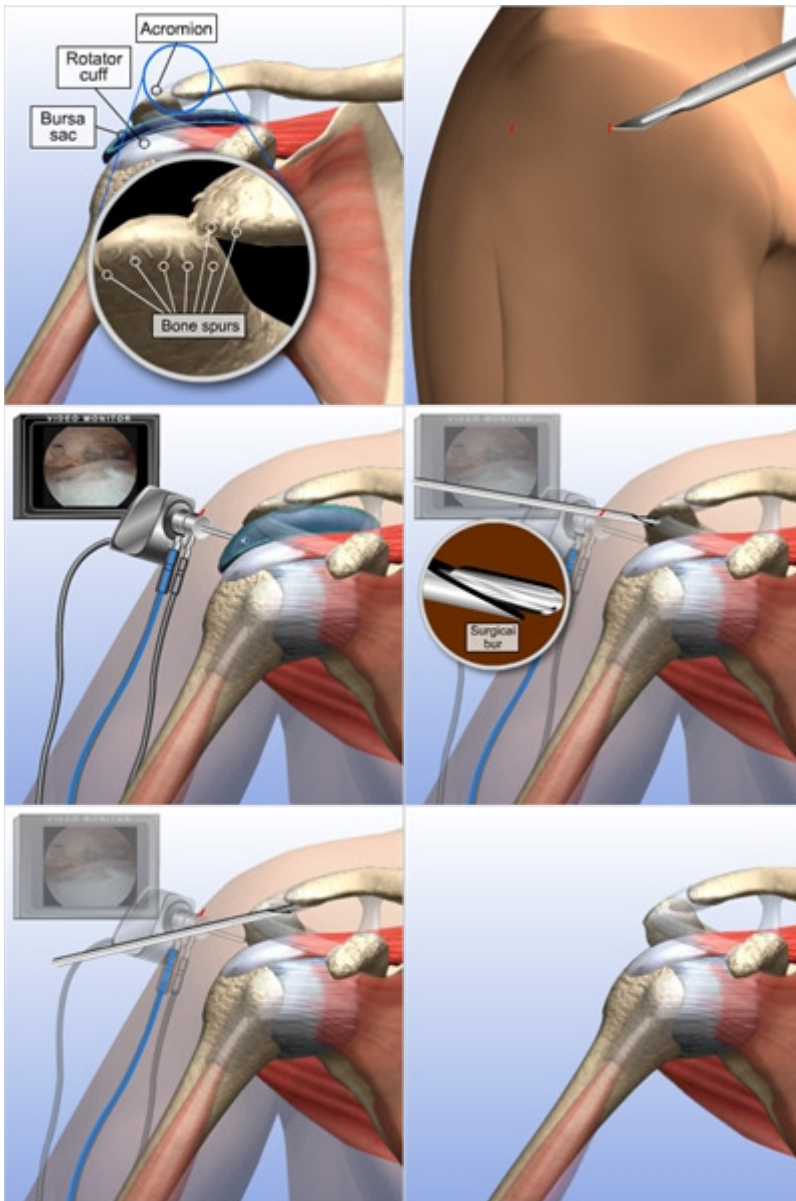


SURGERY FOR AN ARTHRITIC COLLARBONE (AC Joint Resection)



Introduction

Arthritis at the end of the collarbone ("AC arthritis") is a common shoulder problem. This condition occurs when the cartilage cushion between the end of the collarbone and the acromion bone is damaged. The loss of cartilage causes the 2 bones to grind on each other, producing pain on the top of the shoulder.

Chronic rubbing from bone spurs arising from the arthritis can also lead to weakening and even tearing of the shoulder tendons. Symptoms include pain, weakness and loss of motion.

Incisions

Small incisions (portals) are made around the joint. The scope and surgical instruments will go into these incisions.

Visualization

The scope is inserted into the back of the shoulder. Saline solution flows through a tube (cannula) and into the bursa sac to expand the joint and to improve visualization. The image is sent to a video monitor where the surgeon can see inside the joint.

Bone Spur Removal

A specialized surgical instrument is used to remove the inflamed and irritated bursa sac. A surgical shaver or burr is used to remove bone and bone spurs from the underside of the acromion and clavicle. More space is created for the rotator cuff tendons.

Creating Space

About 3/8's of an inch of bone is then removed from the end of the collarbone to create space between it and the end of the acromion. This space will eventually fill with scar tissue and the 2 bones will not rub on one another any longer.

End of Procedure

Following the procedure, patients should expect to be in a sling for 2-3 days. Physical therapy may be required if your shoulder gets stiff after surgery. Full recovery generally takes 4 months.