

Shoulder Arthroscopy

Prior Authorization Tip Sheet

*This tip sheet is intended to further assist you in the prior authorization process and for clarification of the National Imaging Associates, Inc. (NIA)¹ clinical guidelines. It is for informational purposes only and is **NOT** intended as a substitute for the clinical guidelines that should be reviewed prior to submitting requests for surgical procedures.*

Guideline NIA_CG-318

****Office notes should clearly state the surgical plan and laterality****

Categories for requests:

- ❖ **Shoulder Rotator Cuff Repair** (*includes distal clavicle excision, synovectomy, decompression, tenodesis/tenotomy and debridement*).
- ❖ **Shoulder Labral Repair – SLAP, Bankart, Capsulorrhaphy** (*includes distal clavicle excision, synovectomy, decompression, tenodesis/tenotomy and debridement*).
- ❖ **Frozen Shoulder Repair/Adhesive Capsulitis** (*includes lysis of adhesions and manipulation*)
- ❖ **Shoulder Surgery - Other** (*includes debridement, manipulation, decompression, tenotomy, tenodesis, synovectomy, capsulorrhaphy, distal clavicle excision, diagnostic shoulder arthroscopy*)

****Separate requests are required for rotator cuff repair and labral repair****

- Office notes for all shoulder arthroscopy requests should document:
 - Symptom onset, duration, and severity;
 - Loss of function and/or limitations;
 - Type and duration of non-operative management modalities (where applicable).
 - Radiographic findings (MRI reports must be provided)

¹ Effective 1/20/2023, National Imaging Associates, Inc. is now a subsidiary of Evolent Health. Evolent Health and its affiliates and subsidiaries collectively referred to as “Evolent.”

❖ **Shoulder Rotator Cuff Repair** (*includes distal clavicle excision, synovectomy, decompression, tenodesis/tenotomy and debridement*).

- Because the management of rotator cuff pathology is dependent on the size of the tear, an **MRI** is required for **ALL** requests and the actual report radiology should be submitted. As best possible, the **size of the tear** should be stated in the office notes and documentation should be provided if the requesting physician disagrees with the MRI reading.
- A cortisone injection is not required for ANY rotator cuff repair requests. It is only one of several non-operative treatment options.
- There are several contraindications for a rotator cuff repair, including the presence of Kellgren-Lawrence Grade 4 osteoarthritis and no cortisone injection within 12 weeks of Rotator Cuff repair.

Partial tear: Failure of at least **12 weeks** of non-operative treatment, including at least **three** of the following criteria:

- Physical therapy or properly instructed home exercise program;
- Rest or activity modification;
- Minimum of 4 weeks of oral NSAIDs (if not medically contraindicated);
- Single injection of corticosteroid and local anesthetic into subacromial or intra-articular space

Small full-thickness tear (< 1cm): Failure of at least **6 weeks** of non-operative treatment, **including physical therapy** or a properly instructed home exercise program (that includes exercises for scapular dyskinesis when present) **AND** at least **one** of the following:

- Rest or activity modification
- Minimum of 4 weeks of oral NSAIDs (if not medically contraindicated)
- Single injection of corticosteroid and local anesthetic into subacromial or intra-articular space

Medium or large tear full-thickness tear (1-5 cm) – non-operative treatment not required.

Massive Rotator Cuff Tears:

Massive (> 5 cm and at least 2 tendons involved), Full-Thickness Rotator Cuff Tear

Surgical repair of a **massive torn rotator cuff including partial repair and Superior Capsular Reconstruction** may be necessary when **ALL** of the following criteria are met:

- MRI demonstrates no advanced fatty changes (Goutallier stage 0 (normal muscle), 1 (some fatty streaks), or 2 (less than 50% fatty degeneration or infiltration))
- Warner classification of atrophy "none" or "mild"
- No x-ray evidence of chronic subacromial articulation of humeral head, distance between acromion and humeral head
- MRI or Ultrasound showing massive (> 5cm), full-thickness tear (with intact or reparable subscapularis for superior capsular reconstruction)

No advanced or severe arthritis (severe narrowing of glenohumeral space or bone-on-bone articulation, large osteophytes, subchondral sclerosis, or cysts, etc.)

AAOS consensus guidelines state that partial repair and superior capsular reconstruction, can improve patient reported outcomes.

❖ **Shoulder Labral Repair – SLAP, Bankart, Capsulorrhaphy** (*includes distal clavicle excision, synovectomy, decompression, tenodesis/tenotomy and debridement*).

- **Type 2 or 4 SLAP tear** (biceps anchor detached)
- Failure of at least **12 weeks** of non-operative treatment, including activity modification/avoidance of painful activities **AND at least one** of the following:
 - Minimum of 4 weeks of oral NSAIDs (if not medically contraindicated)
 - Physical therapy or a properly instructed home exercise program
 - Intra-articular injection

Bankart tears:

Non-operative treatment not required if the following criteria are met:

Bankart repair of **an acute labral tear** may be necessary when **ALL** the following criteria are met:

- History of an acute event of instability (subluxation or dislocation) or acute onset of pain following activity;
- Acute labral tear on MRI or CT imaging;
- Age < 30;
- Range of motion is not limited by stiffness upon physical exam;
- Clinical exam findings demonstrate positive apprehension test, positive relocation test, positive labral grind test, or objective laxity with pain.

Bankart repair of **a recurrent (two or more dislocations) labral tear** may be necessary when **ALL** the following criteria are met:

- Recurrent instability (subluxation or dislocation);
- Evidence of a labral tear with or without bony Bankart fracture of the glenoid upon imaging;

- Range of motion is not limited by stiffness upon physical exam;
- Clinical exam findings demonstrate positive apprehension test, positive relocation test, positive labral grind test, or objective laxity with pain.

Latarjet or Remplissage procedures for recurrent (two or more dislocations) may be necessary when ALL of the following criteria are met:

- Recurrent instability (subluxation or dislocation);
- Evidence of a large, engaging Hill-Sachs lesion of the humerus or greater than 20% glenoid bone loss by X-ray, CT or MRI
- Range of motion is not limited by stiffness upon physical exam;
- Clinical exam findings demonstrate positive apprehension test, positive relocation test, positive labral grind test, or objective laxity with pain.

❖ **Frozen Shoulder Repair/Adhesive Capsulitis** (*includes lysis of adhesions and manipulation*)

- Failure of at least **12 weeks** of non-operative treatment that includes physical therapy or a properly instructed home exercise program and documentation of **any** of the following:
 - Minimum of 4 weeks of oral or topical NSAIDs (if not medically contraindicated);
 - Rest or activity modification;
 - Heat/Ice;
 - Corticosteroid injection

❖ **Shoulder Surgery – Other**

❖ **Distal Clavicle Excision (DCE)**

- Failure of at least 12 weeks of non-operative treatment that includes **at least two** of the following:
 - Oral or topical NSAIDS (4-week minimum for oral NSAIDS unless contraindicated);
 - Rest/activity modification;
 - AC joint corticosteroid injection (if DCE is to be performed as a standalone procedure, AC injection must be performed*);
 - Physical therapy or a properly instructed home exercise program;

***NOTE:** If DCE is to be performed *in isolation of other shoulder procedures*, an AC joint injection is required for diagnostic purposes and documentation should support pain relief from injection. If no response to injection, this is a strong negative predictor to surgical outcome for isolated DCE.

❖ Long Head Biceps (LHB) Tenotomy/Tenodesis

- Failure of at least 12 weeks of non-operative treatment to include **TWO** of the following:
 - Oral or topical NSAIDS (4-week minimum for oral NSAIDS unless contraindicated);
 - Rest/activity modification;
 - Bicipital groove or IA joint corticosteroid injection;
 - Physical therapy or a properly instructed home exercise program
 - A biceps tenodesis or tenotomy may be approved when performed in conjunction with a TSA

❖ Diagnostic Shoulder Arthroscopy

- Failure of non-surgical management for at least three (3) months duration to include **TWO** of the following:
 - Rest or activity modifications/limitations;
 - Ice/heat;
 - Use of a sling/immobilizer/brace;
 - Pharmacologic treatment: oral/topical NSAIDS, acetaminophen, analgesics, tramadol;
 - Physical therapy modalities;
 - Supervised home exercise;
 - Corticosteroid injection

**** NOTE:** The following is not managed by NIA:

- In-office diagnostic arthroscopy (e.g., Mi-Eye, VisionScope) or US-guided percutaneous debridement or tenotomy (e.g., Tenex, TenJet), no ORIF, hardware removal.