

## Continued Shoulder Pain After Decompression Surgery



**S**houlder impingement syndrome, the condition that often results in decompression surgery, can cause pain as you perform your daily activities. Therefore, it is understandably frustrating when you continue to experience pain after surgery. Luckily, chances are that this new discomfort will be short-lived, especially with good postoperative care.

In most cases, **decompression**—a procedure performed to “open” the subacromial space between the top of the arm and the shoulder by removing scar tissue and bone spurs—**is performed using an instrument called an arthroscope**. This fiber optic scope allows surgeons to examine the shoulder joint with a few small incisions, sometimes finding injuries that magnetic resonance imaging or traditional open surgery might miss. It is **a minimally invasive procedure with a low risk of complications**. However, surgery is still surgery, and some postoperative pain is to be expected.

Keep in mind that the length of your recovery depends on the severity of your shoulder impingement in the first place. More extreme cases require more extensive surgery. Prior to the surgery, the impingement may have hindered your shoulder’s mobility, meaning that your muscles have paid the price.

The good news is that arthroscopic decompression is successful in more than 80% of patients. **Your chances of success increase when you follow a physical therapy program that helps you regain full range of motion in your shoulder and eases any stiffness or pain you might be feeling.**

Even before you are able to move the shoulder, we can work with your surgeon to develop exercises that work the hand and elbow, which will keep postoperative swelling to a minimum. We can also design a rehabilitation program to give you better control of the musculature involved, leading to a pain-free, fully functional shoulder.