



November 2009

## Shoulder Stabilization Surgery for the Young Athlete



**S**houlder dislocations are quite common in active young people. While surgery might seem like an extreme solution to a moderate problem, the procedure is actually the best chance for a problem-free shoulder in the future.

A dislocation usually results in a trip to the emergency room, where the shoulder is reduced (placed back into its normal position) and stabilized with a sling. For many adults,

this would be the only course of treatment, followed perhaps by some physical therapy, but **for those younger than 30, the chance of a second (and potentially more debilitating) dislocation is about 80%, because portions of the ligaments and capsule do not heal fully.** This can mean long periods of being kept out of sports or play and ultimately may result in the need for surgery anyway.

While it might seem a scary prospect, **shoulder stabilization surgery can prevent future problems for the active young person.** He or she will be able to return to normal activities and sports without the fear of another dislocation, soreness or reduced mobility from incomplete healing.

A good rehabilitation program will hasten and enhance recovery. We can design a regimen of exercises that strengthen musculature to protect other shoulder structures while focusing on the patient's particular needs. By sticking to the program, the results of the surgery should be permanent, and the athlete will be running, jumping and throwing in no time.