



This document will give you information about arthroscopic release of frozen shoulder. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

### **What is frozen shoulder?**

Frozen shoulder is a stiff and painful shoulder caused by inflammation, swelling and contraction of your shoulder capsule (see figure 1).

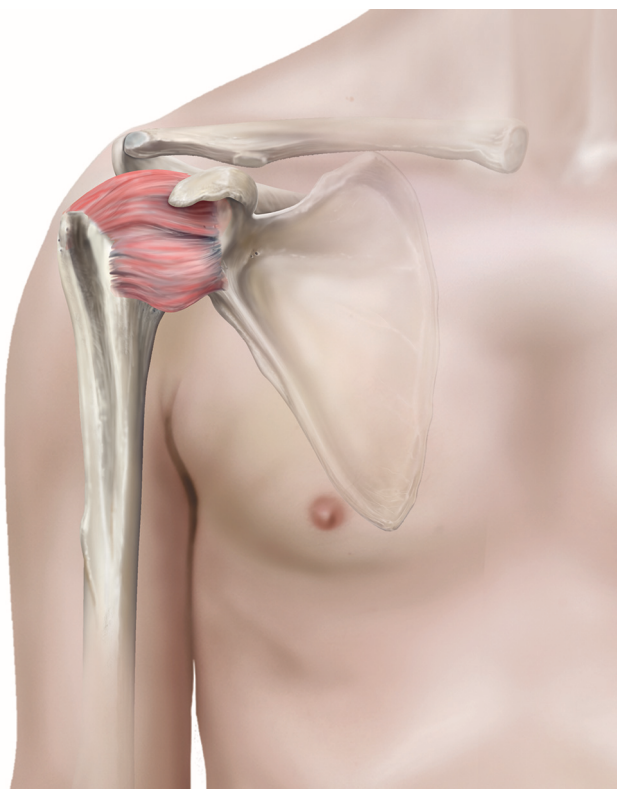


Figure 1  
A frozen shoulder

### **What are the benefits of surgery?**

You should have less pain and be able to use your shoulder better.

### **Are there any alternatives to surgery?**

Simple painkillers can help control the pain but you will usually need stronger painkillers. A steroid injection can sometimes reduce pain and stiffness. Physiotherapy is often helpful in improving movement if the pain can be controlled. Stretching the capsule by a high-pressure injection has been shown to help. It is possible to have a manipulation under anaesthesia (MUA).

### **What does the operation involve?**

Various anaesthetic techniques are possible. The operation usually takes 30 minutes to an hour.

Your surgeon will make two small cuts. They will insert a small telescope through one of the cuts so they can examine the joint. They will insert surgical instruments through the other cut to divide the capsule to improve the range of movement of your shoulder.

### **What complications can happen?**

#### **1 General complications**

- Pain
- Bleeding
- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Unsightly scarring

#### **2 Specific complications**

- Infection in your shoulder joint
- Continued stiff shoulder
- Damage to nerves around your shoulder

### **How soon will I recover?**

You should be able to go home the same day. You do not need to wear a sling and aim to use your shoulder as much as possible. It usually takes about six months to get a good range of movement.

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

Most people make a good recovery.

### **Summary**

Frozen shoulder can cause severe pain and stiffness. An arthroscopic capsular release should reduce your pain and help you to move your shoulder more easily.

### **Acknowledgements**

Author: Prof Lennard Funk MSc FRCS (Tr. & Orth.)  
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