

## Shoulder pain: should I have arthroscopic surgery?

### Is this decision aid relevant for me?

- This decision aid can help if you have shoulder pain due to common causes like rotator cuff tears or bursitis and are considering arthroscopic surgery of the shoulder

### Cause and symptoms of shoulder pain

- **Shoulder pain** is commonly caused by rotator cuff tears, swelling of fluid filled sacs call bursa ('bursitis') or impingement.
- Impingement occurs due to contact between a bony part of the shoulder (the 'acromion') and the rotator cuff tendons or bursa (see picture). Contact usually occurs as you move your arm out to the side.
- Shoulder pain often makes it difficult to do simple everyday tasks like reaching into a high cupboard and washing hair.
- Symptoms often take time to settle and one half of patients are better by around 6 months.



## SHOULDER PAIN: SHOULD I HAVE SURGERY?

All information in this decision aid should be discussed with a health professional

### + Who should read this decision aid?

This decision aid is for people with persisting shoulder pain that is likely due to issues with rotator cuff tendons that move and support the shoulder (eg. inflammation, tears).

This type of pain often occurs around the shoulder. It makes it difficult to do simple tasks that involve lifting your arm above your head (eg. washing hair).

**This decision aid does not apply to people who have other causes of shoulder pain** like frozen shoulder (which causes pain and severe stiffness), osteoarthritis, or shoulder pain that begins after trauma immediately resulting in loss of movement or strength (eg. sudden rotator cuff tear, fracture, dislocation). If you're unsure of the cause of your pain, see a health professional.

