## What practical issues should I consider?

The table shows key practical issues for those who have arthroscopic surgery and those who do not.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure and follow-up</th>
<th>ARTHROSCOPIC SURGERY</th>
<th>NO SURGERY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Performed by a surgeon in an operating theatre. Requires an anesthetic. Individualised follow-up with wound care and exercise</td>
<td>Advice from a professional about other treatments may be useful (eg. injections, exercise, activity modification, medication)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recuperation</td>
<td>You may use a sling a few days after surgery. Recuperation typically takes between 2-6 weeks</td>
<td>No recuperation needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity restrictions</td>
<td>Avoid heavy lifting for 7-21 days, overhead activities for 6 weeks and pushing through your hands for 3 months</td>
<td>No activity restrictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time off work</td>
<td>Depends on recovery and demands of job. Usually a few weeks after surgery</td>
<td>No time off work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving</td>
<td>You can start driving as soon as you feel able to steer. This is normally after one week</td>
<td>No driving limitations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs</td>
<td>Out-of-pocket costs for surgery are generally high. There may also be out-of-pocket costs for physiotherapy after surgery</td>
<td>No surgical costs BUT there may be out-of-pocket costs for physiotherapy or injections</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Summary of benefits, harms, and other practical issues

#### NON-SURGICAL OPTIONS

- **Potential benefits**
  - May improve by itself (within 6 months half of people will recover) or with non-surgical options (ie. injections, exercise, or medication)
  - Avoid surgery

- **Potential harms**
  - May decide to have surgery later
  - Cost of non-surgical options (eg. injection, physiotherapy)
  - Time to attend health appointments (eg. for physiotherapy)
  - Regardless of what treatment you have, your symptoms may not improve

#### SURGERY FOLLOWED BY 3-12 MONTHS REHABILITATION

- **Potential benefits**
  - May provide slight improvement in pain and function compared to non-surgical options

- **Potential harms**
  - Possible surgical harms (eg. frozen shoulder, infection)
  - Your symptoms may not improve with surgery
  - Symptoms will temporarily be worse after surgery due to the operation (eg. pain when sleeping or moving your arm)
  - Rehabilitation for 3-12 months after surgery and time to attend rehabilitation
  - May take up to 6 weeks after subacromial decompression and 12 weeks after rotator cuff repair to perform daily activities (eg. reach above your head, lift heavy objects)
  - May take 3-4 months after subacromial decompression and 6-12 months after rotator cuff repair to return to heavy manual work, exercise, or sport
  - Out-of-pocket costs are generally higher for surgery than non-surgical options. There may be costs for rehabilitation after surgery and due to time needed off work