

## Prolonged Shoulder Pain: It may be Rotator Cuff Tear

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**70% elderly persons are suffering with shoulder pain, key is to diagnose it earliest possible**



Arthroscopy and Sports Medicine Centre, BLK Super Speciality Hospital recently organized a press conference where Dr. Deepak Choudhary, Director, Arthroscopy and Sports Medicine discussed about how prolonged shoulder pain can be a Rotator Cuff Tear.

Dr. VK Saraswat, eminent scientist and Member, NITI Aayog and former Secretary, DRDO had a normal shoulder pain which continued for six weeks. After clinical investigations, it was diagnosed as a rotator cuff tear. With early diagnosis and conservative treatment (physiotherapy), Dr. Saraswat got rid of shoulder pain and is now actively doing routine chores.

While discussing the same he said, "I was undergoing acute shoulder pain and it was difficult for me to raise my hand. I was not able to do easy tasks with my right hand. Initially, I thought it is normal shoulder pain due to some weight lifting or muscle tear. When pain did not subside with medicines and exercise, friends advised me to go physiotherapist as it looks like frozen shoulder case. Meanwhile, I consulted my friend Dr. Choudhary and he raised an alarm and asked me to undergo some tests under his observation. I am thankful to him for relieving me from shoulder pain and that also without a surgery."

"We tend to delay treatment for shoulder pain and I also delayed proper medical intervention for quite sometimes. People, suffering from shoulder pain, need to be made aware about the rotator cuff tear and availability of an effective Arthroscopic treatment for that", he added.

A national level young wrestler from Bhiwani, Haryana, Hemant (18) had to undergo minimal invasive Arthroscopic surgery to get rid of his shoulder pain. Last year, during a wrestling competition, he had severe shoulder injury which was previously diagnosed as frozen shoulder and took steroids for relief. But pain continued and he could not move his hand. On advice of a family friend, he consulted Dr Choudhary and got the correct treatment. After Arthroscopic surgery, now he is planning to go back to wrestling mat with full strength.

Dr. Choudhary who is credited with performing over 12,000 complex Arthroscopic knee and shoulder surgeries said, "Normally in such cases patients consults doctors and physiotherapists who diagnose this condition as frozen shoulder and

the patients undergo some steroid shots in the shoulder and many sessions of physiotherapy without much relief. Hemant's case was similar and timely diagnosis detected the problem of rotator cuff tear and we performed a minimally invasive surgery (Arthroscopic Rotator Cuff Repair), where the torn tendon was repaired back to the bone using some imported anchors. It has been 6 months after surgery and he is pain free and has regained normal strength in his shoulder. Dr. Saraswat got rid of pain with conservative treatment and there was no need for a surgery."

In the last six months at BLK Super Speciality Hospital, Dr. Chaudhary has treated over 80 patients who suffered from similar problems and nearly 70% patients were suffering with rotator cuff problem but are misdiagnosed as frozen shoulder. Patients kept suffering for a long time due to lack of awareness and missed diagnosis.

Rotator cuff is a group of 4 muscles over the shoulder joint which with advancing age undergoes degeneration and sometimes after trivial trauma or even without trauma can be torn leading to severe pain especially at night and weakness of the shoulder.

Dr. Shiv Chouksey, Associate Consultant, Centre for Sports Medicine, BLK Super Specialty Hospital explained, "The key to successful treatment of the condition is to diagnose the condition early and performing repair in well selected cases. Some initial cases do respond to conservative medicine like steroid injection and physiotherapy. The latest conservative modality in early cases is Platelet-rich plasma (PRP) injection where patient's own blood is withdrawn and the growth factors centrifuged and injected into the injured area resulting in healing."

According to the Arthroscopic Surgeons, only after proper evaluation, the correct plan for treatment whether conservative or surgical can be decided for a patient depending on his age, activity level and other associated conditions. Arthroscopic treatment in well selected case of rotator cuff repair provides dramatic relief in terms of pain and regaining strength.