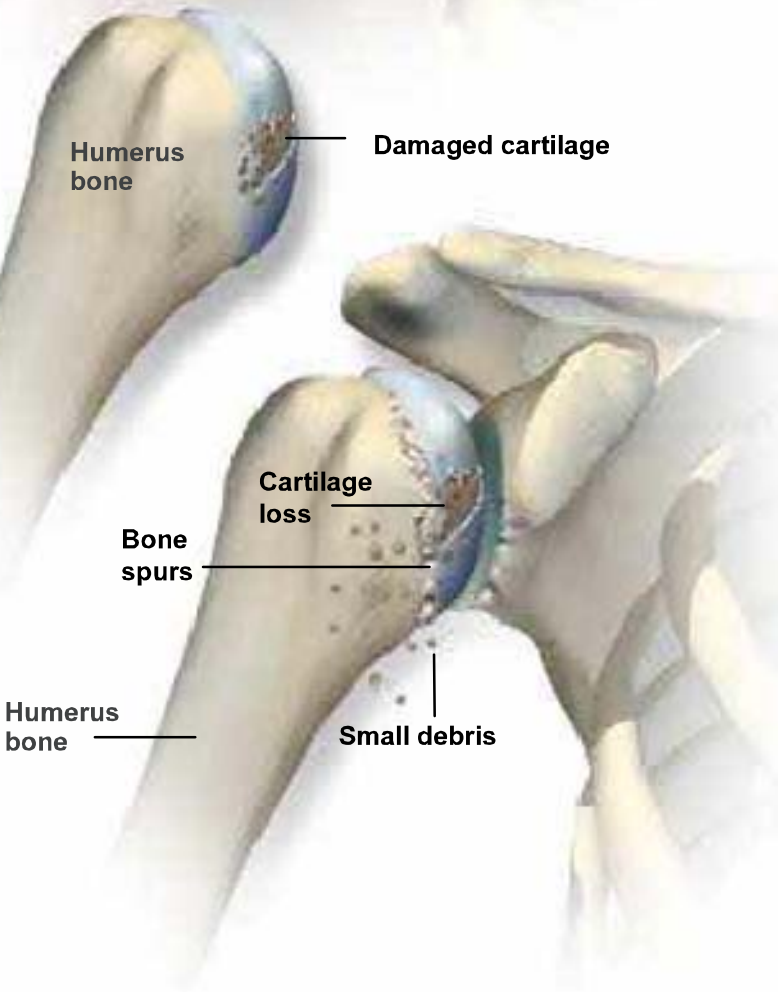
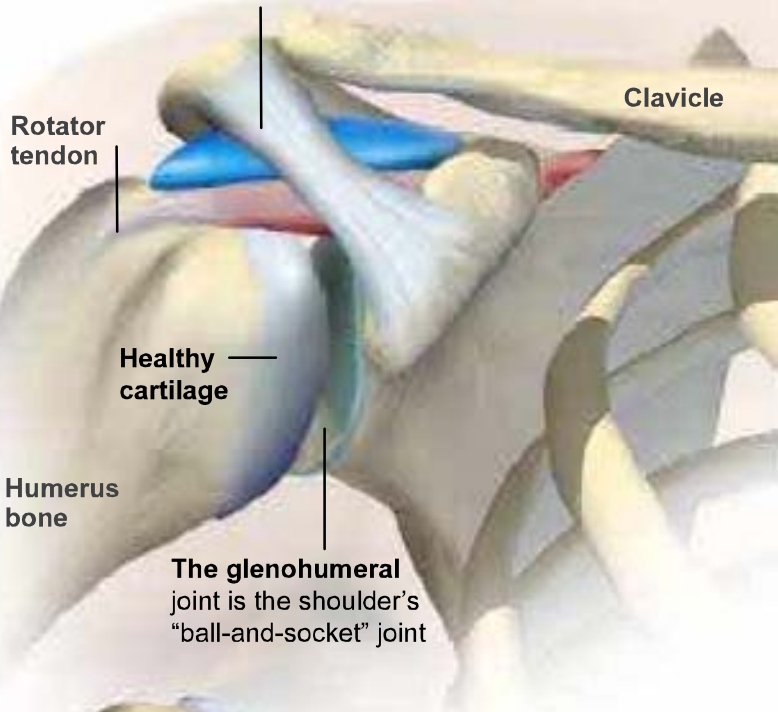


SHOULDER ARTHRITIS

The acromioclavicular (AC) joint is where the collarbone (clavicle) meets the acromion



Overview

Arthritis (also called osteoarthritis or degenerative arthritis) involves the swelling and damage of the joint. The condition causes pain and stiffness and limits shoulder joint movement. Causes of degeneration include increased age, everyday use of the joint, repetitive overhead movements, injuries such as fractures or chronic rotator cuff tears, or infection.

Damaged Cartilage

Cartilage is a smooth protective joint tissue that cushions joints and allows them to move freely. Cartilage may deteriorate over time. As it loses its cushioning ability, heavy use or injury may increase its deterioration.

Cartilage Loss

Eventually, as cartilage wears away completely, bone rubs against bone.

Bone Spurs

This damage promotes painful new bone growth along the edges of the joint. These lumpy areas of bone, called bone spurs or osteophytes, develop slowly over many years.

Symptoms

Arthritis sufferers may feel as if their shoulder is stiff or their arm motions are limited. Severe arthritis may be painful at all times, even at rest.

Treatment

Arthritis may be treated with cortisone injections, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications, use of a splint or brace, exercise, and modification of daily activities. In some cases, surgery may be needed. Total shoulder replacement is commonly used to repair the glenohumeral joint. Resection arthroplasty, in which the surgeon removes part of the clavicle to free it from the acromion, is commonly used to repair the AC joint.