

# Highmark Commercial Medical Policy- NY

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<b>Medical Policy:</b>	S-311-0023
<b>Topic (or Title):</b>	Shoulder Surgery: Labral Repair
<b>Section:</b>	Surgery
<b>Effective Date:</b>	<del>June 3, 2024</del> <u>June 1, 2026</u>
<b>Issued Date:</b>	<del>September 8, 2025</del> <u>June 1, 2026</u>
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<b>Annual Review:</b>	<del>July 2025</del> <u>April 2026</u>

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The shoulder labrum is a type of cartilage that lines the shoulder socket (called the glenoid) of the shoulder joint. The labrum helps keep the shoulder joint in place. When the labrum tears, it may result in shoulder pain or shoulder instability (the feeling that the shoulder is slipping out of place). Labral tears are usually caused by overuse or injury and commonly accompany other injuries to the shoulder.

## Policy Position

Labral repair of the shoulder may be considered medically necessary when **ALL** of the following criteria are met;

- Shoulder pain; **and**
- Functional disability that interferes with activities of daily living (ADL); **and**
- Physical exam which may include, but is not limited to positive O'Brien test, anterior slide test, limited or painful range of motion, and shoulder instability; **and**
- Advanced imaging (MRI, CT) that identifies the labral tear; **and**
- ~~Unresponsive to conservative treatment for three (3) months as directed by a physician including:~~
- Failure of three (3) months of non-surgical conservative therapy including **ONE or more of the following**
  - NSAIDs and/or analgesics; **or**
  - Physical therapy; **or**
  - Corticosteroid injection.

Labral repair not meeting the criteria as indicated in the policy is considered not medically necessary.

## Procedure Codes

29807

23455

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## Related Policies

Refer to medical policy S-308-001, Shoulder Surgery: Loose Body/Foreign Body Removal for additional information.

Refer to medical policy S-309-001, Shoulder Surgery: Debridement, for additional information.

Refer to medical policy S-312-001, Shoulder Surgery: Biceps Tenodesis, for additional information.

Refer to medical policy S-313-001, Shoulder Surgery: Shoulder Instability and/or Laxity, for additional information.

Refer to medical policy S-314-001, Shoulder Surgery: Coracoplasty/Subcoracoid Decompressions, for additional information.

Refer to medical policy S-326-001, Shoulder surgery: Distal Clavicle Excision/Subacromial Decompression/Acromioplasty, for additional information

## Professional Statements and Societal Positions

The American Academy of Orthopedics Surgeons (AAOS) ~~2019~~ Guidelines [2025](#)

Strong evidence supports no difference in long-term (> 1 year) patient-reported outcomes or cuff healing rates between open and arthroscopic repairs; however, arthroscopic-only technique is associated with better short-term improvement in post operative recovery of motion and decreased visual analog scale (VAS) scores.

### SMALL TO MEDIUM TEARS

Both physical therapy and operative treatment result in significant improvement in patient-reported outcomes for patients with symptomatic small to medium full thickness rotator cuff tears.

MRI, MRA, CT and ultrasound are useful adjuncts to a clinical exam and radiographs for identifying rotator cuff tears.

The use of a single injection of corticosteroids with local anesthetic can be considered for short-term improvement in both pain and function for patients with shoulder pain. In patients who cannot tolerate corticosteroids, injectable NSAIDs may be considered

## Place of Service: Inpatient/Outpatient

Shoulder Surgery: Labral Repair is typically an outpatient procedure which is only eligible for coverage as an inpatient procedure in special circumstances, including, but not limited to, the presence of a co-morbid condition that would require monitoring in a more controlled environment such as the inpatient setting.

### References

Rees J, Craig R, Nagra N, et al. Serious adverse event rates and reoperation after arthroscopic shoulder surgery: Population-based cohort study. BMJ. 2022;378:e069901.

Davey MS, Hurley ET, Carroll PJ, Galbraith JG, Shannon F, Kaar K, Mullett H. Arthroscopic rotator cuff repair results in improved clinical outcomes and low revision rates at 10-year follow-up: A systematic review. Arthroscopy. 2023;39(2):452-458.

Berk AN, Cregar WM, Gachigi KK, et.al, Saltzman BM. Outcomes of subacromial balloon spacer implantation for irreparable rotator cuff tears: A systematic review and meta-analysis. J Shoulder Elbow Surg. 2023;32(10):2180-2191.

[McNamara JK, Sandler AB, Scanaliato JP, Tyler JR, Boolani A, Parnes N. Clinical outcomes after arthroscopic 270° labral repair in active-duty military patients: At a minimum of 10-year follow-up. \*Orthop J Sports Med.\* 2025;13\(6\):23259671251342592](#)

[Marcaccio S, Buerba R, Arner J, Bradley J. Arthroscopic Anterior and inferior labral repair for traumatic shoulder instability. \*Video J Sports Med.\* 2024; 4\(5\):26350254241262328](#)

## The policy position applies to all commercial lines of business

*This policy is designed to address medical guidelines that are appropriate for the majority of individuals with a particular disease, illness, or condition. Each person's unique clinical or other circumstances may warrant individual consideration, based on review of applicable medical records, as well as other regulatory, contractual and/or legal requirements.*

*Medical policies do not constitute medical advice, nor are they intended to govern the practice of medicine. They are intended to reflect Highmark's reimbursement and coverage guidelines. Coverage for services may vary for individual members, based on the terms of the benefit contract, and subject to the applicable laws of your state.*

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  - *Qualified sign language interpreters*
  - *Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)*
- *Provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:*
  - *Qualified interpreters*
  - *Information written in other languages*

*If you need these services, contact the Civil Rights Coordinator.*

*If you believe that the Claims Administrator/Insurer has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, you can file a grievance with: Civil Rights Coordinator, P.O. Box 22492, Pittsburgh, PA 15222, Phone: 1-866-286-8295, TTY: 711, Fax: 412-544-2475, email: [CivilRightsCoordinator@highmarkhealth.org](mailto:CivilRightsCoordinator@highmarkhealth.org). You can file a grievance in person or by mail, fax, or email. If you need help filing a grievance, the Civil Rights Coordinator is available to help you.*

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>, or by mail or phone at:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Room 509F, HHH Building  
Washington, D.C. 20201  
1-800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD)

Complaint forms are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>.

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DRAFT

ATTENTION: If you speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call the number on the back of your ID card (TTY: 711).

ATENCIÓN: Si usted habla español, servicios de asistencia lingüística, de forma gratuita, están disponibles para usted. Llame al número en la parte posterior de su tarjeta de identificación (TTY: 711).

请注意：如果您说中文，可向您提供免费语言协助服务。

请拨打您的身份证背面的号码（TTY：711）。

CHÚ Ý: Nếu quý vị nói tiếng Việt, chúng tôi cung cấp dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí cho quý vị. Xin gọi số điện thoại ở mặt sau thẻ ID của quý vị (TTY: 711).

알림: 한국어를 사용하시는 분들을 위해 무료 통역이 제공됩니다. ID 카드 뒷면에 있는 번호로 전화하십시오 (TTY: 711).

ATENSYON: Kung nagsasalita ka ng Tagalog, may makukuha kang mga libreng serbisyonang tulong sa wika. Tawagan ang numero sa likod ng iyong ID card (TTY: 711).

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ATTENTION: Si c'est créole que vous connaissez, il y a un certain service de langues qui est gratis et disponible pour vous-même. Composez le numéro qui est au dos de votre carte d'identité. (TTY: 711).

ATTENTION: Si vous parlez français, les services d'assistance linguistique, gratuitement, sont à votre disposition. Appelez le numéro au dos de votre carte d'identité (TTY: 711).

UWAGA: Dla osób mówiących po polsku dostępna jest bezpłatna pomoc językowa. Zadzwoń pod numer podany na odwrocie karty ubezpieczenia zdrowotnego (TTY: 711).

ATENÇÃO: Se a sua língua é o português, temos atendimento gratuito para você no seu idioma. Ligue para o número no verso da sua identidade (TTY: 711).

ATTENZIONE: se parla italiano, per lei sono disponibili servizi di assistenza linguistica a titolo gratuito. Contatti il numero riportato sul retro della sua carta d'identità (TTY: 711).

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