



CAPTA NEWS

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Surgical Options for the Biceps Tendon Repair

By Nichole Doorn, DPT

Have you had or are you having a shoulder surgery to repair your biceps tendon? Then you may want to know a little more about the difference between a biceps *tenotomy* and a *tenodesis*. Instability of the biceps tendon, inflammatory/degenerative changes, like tendonitis, and SLAP lesions are the three conditions that affect the long head of the biceps. A biceps tenodesis or tenotomy is commonly performed to treat one of these three conditions and can be done by itself or as a part of a larger surgery to repair the rotator cuff.

A *tenodesis* is where the tendon is released from the shoulder socket and reattached to the humerus. This option allows for a better cosmetic result and more strength with supination (turning palm up). A tenodesis will also correct the typical "Popeye" deformity that is seen when a person ruptures their biceps tendon (see picture below). At one time a tenodesis was the treatment of choice for most biceps repairs because it maintained the shape of the biceps and the full function of the biceps, but there is also another choice.

A *tenotomy* is where the tendon is released from the shoulder socket and is not reattached to anything. This option will allow for the same kind of pain relief as a tenodesis and a faster recovery. This meaning that a person would be able to return to all activities sooner and will typically have less formal therapy if it is not done as a part of a larger surgery. With a tenotomy the studies have shown that there is no significant difference in strength, pain or cosmetic deformity when compared to those patients who have had a tenodesis.

There are a few factors to consider when deciding on the best surgical option for you. They include the cause of the injury, the integrity of the tendon, the extent to which the tendon is involved and if there are any other underlying problems within your shoulder. So, when considering the best surgical option, you and your surgeon will ultimately decide what is best according to your specific injury and your lifestyle demands.



← "Popeye" muscle

