

# Symptoms and Physical Findings of Rotator Cuff Tears

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Lecture 2(12~15 min lecture)

Symposium “ Rotator Cuff Tears ”

When patients with rotator cuff tears come to our institute, the chief complaints are almost always pain. There are three types of pain: motion pain, rest pain, and night pain. Motion pain is usually associated with mechanical impingement between the torn rotator cuff tendon and the undersurface of the acromion. Rest pain and night pain are more likely to be associated with the subacromial bursa. Night pain is also associated with the posture and may be with the body temperature. Are these types of pain related to the location of pathologies? We evaluated the efficacy of pain area and physical findings to locate a tear of the rotator cuff. The location of pain was recorded on a shoulder chart with 6 different areas around the shoulder. The diagnostic accuracies of the supraspinatus test (full can test and empty can test) for supraspinatus tear, the external rotation strength for infraspinatus tear, and the push off test for subscapularis tear were assessed. The motion pain was the most common type of pain and was located most commonly at the lateral and anterior regions of the shoulder. There was no specificity in location of pain with regards to the tear site. On the other hand, the physical examinations aiming to locate the tear site are clinically useful when assessed positive with muscle weakness. Signs and symptoms of a patient should be carefully examined and analyzed before making a conclusion of which pathology is responsible for the symptoms of the patient.