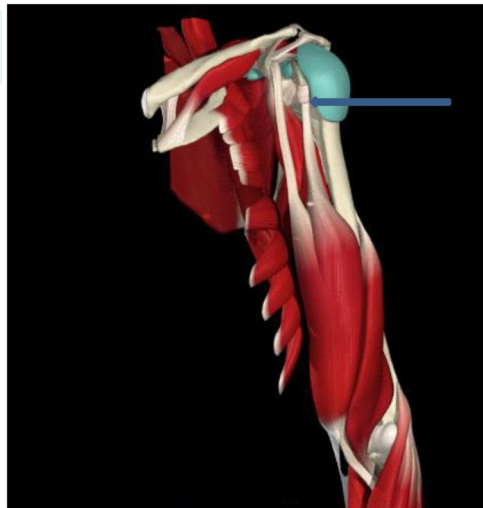


### Shoulder - Biceps Tendinopathy

Tendons are connective tissue, which connect muscle to bone and allow the muscles to produce force and move the bones. The long head of the biceps tendon attaches to the top of the shoulder. It provides an anchor for the biceps muscle to lift the arm or the elbow and enhances stability of the shoulder via depression of the head of the humerus. Tendinopathy means disease or disorder of the tendon.

Biceps Tendinopathy is a condition which affects the long head of biceps tendon and occurs at its origin at the shoulder. There are two types of tendon injury, often co-existing, which are problems within the tendon or the surrounding sleeve, known as the tendon sheath. It is usually due to overuse of the tendon but can be due to a traumatic force. Pulling, lifting, throwing and bending the elbow are activities which commonly lead to biceps tendinopathy. It also occurs secondarily to another condition known as subacromial impingement, particularly if there is a significant rotator cuff tear.



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#### Common Features

- Pain at the front of the shoulder or forearm which can increase with activity
- Difficulty lifting objects e.g. carrying groceries
- Resisted biceps contraction is often weak and painful
- The biceps tendon is sore to touch

#### Diagnosis/Investigations

The diagnosis is usually made from the history and from clinical testing. Further investigations such as MRI and ultrasound can be undertaken to confirm the diagnosis and to assess other structures.

#### Treatment

- Initially resting from lifting or aggravating activities is required to help reduce the symptoms
- A graded strengthening and flexibility program will be established to regain normal shoulder mechanics
- Any biomechanical faults or training errors will also be assessed and addressed as necessary by the physiotherapist
- A gradual return to activity will be guided by the physiotherapist

In some cases the tendon may be slow or fail to respond to conservative treatment. There are several medical options ranging from injections through to surgery

and a Doctor's opinion is required for these.

#### Prognosis/Possible Outcomes

Recovery times vary depending on the severity of the condition and the length of time the symptoms have been present. Return to normal activity can range from weeks to months.