

Reverse Total Shoulder Replacement an Option for Those with Rotator Cuff Injuries

By Curtis Noel, MD

Most people have had friends or family members who have successfully regained their range of motion and strength after having a knee or hip replacement. What many may not know, is that the same kind of surgery can be performed on shoulders.

There are two types of shoulder replacement surgeries: conventional and reverse total shoulder. With a conventional surgery, the artificial ball and socket replacements mimic normal shoulder anatomy; a plastic cup is fitted into the socket and a ball is attached to the arm bone. In a reverse total shoulder, the plastic socket and metal ball are switched.

Reverse total shoulder replacement is especially beneficial to anyone who has a torn rotator cuff that is too big to be fixed. Over time, when this is not addressed properly, a severe type of arthritis, called cuff tear arthropathy, can develop. This procedure is also effective for those who have suffered shoulder fractures or have failed previous shoulder surgeries.

Recovery time varies from person to person. In that first month, most patients report feeling less pain in the shoulder. Another benchmark is returning to basic function in the first two to four months with more strength and increased range of motion. It can take up to a full year to regain complete strength.

There is a misconception that total shoulder patients don't do well after surgery because these surgeries are done by surgeons who perform less than 20 a year. For better outcomes, we recommend that you find a surgeon who performs a higher volume. At the Crystal Clinic Orthopaedic Center, we do more reverse total shoulder replacements than most places in the country. We have a great team and are one of only three Ohio hospitals recognized by The Joint Commission for excellence in total shoulder surgery.



To learn more, visit CrystalClinic.com or call 1-888-502-3041.

A board-certified, fellowship-trained orthopaedic surgeon, Dr. Noel specializes in shoulder and elbow surgery and sports medicine.

Last year, Dr. Noel performed more than 270 shoulder replacement surgeries. When he's not in the operating room, he often travels around the country, teaching other

surgeons how to master reverse total shoulder arthroplasty. Dr. Noel has been a physician since 2000 and is a member of the American Shoulder and Elbow Society.



Patient satisfaction and mobility are Dr. Noel's top two priorities. He and his staff are pictured here with some of his happy patients.