

# Supraspinatus Tendinopathy

## Surgery Service



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- Radiology & Fluoroscopy
- Soft Tissue Surgery
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### Locations

#### **Auburn Hills**

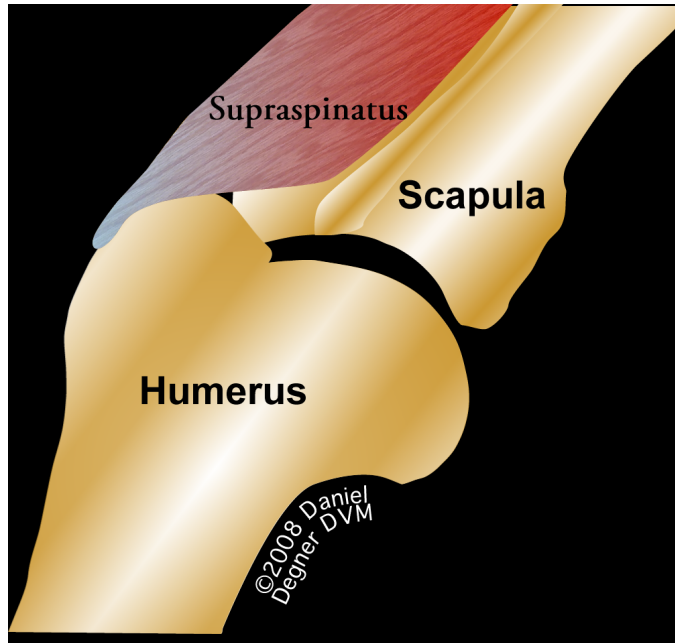
3412 E. Walton Blvd.  
(West of Squirrel Rd.)  
(248) 371-3713

#### **Grand Rapids**

1425 Michigan St. NE  
(East of Fuller Rd.)  
(616) 284-5300

#### **MVS Southfield**

29080 Inkster Rd.  
(North of 12 Mile Rd.)  
(248) 354-6660



### **Anatomy**

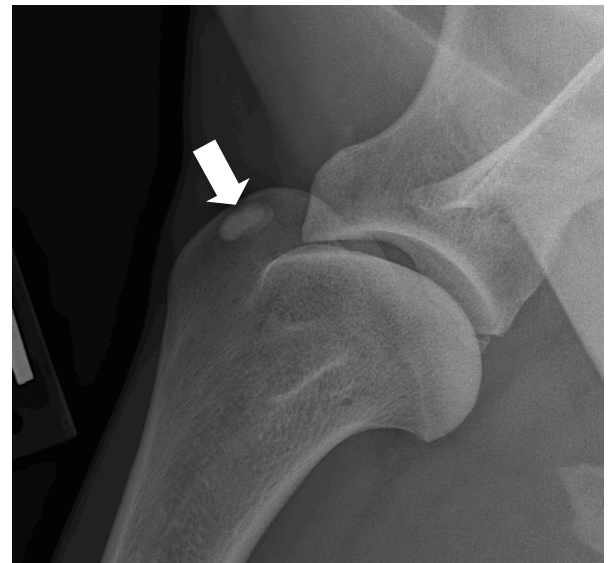
The shoulder is supported by numerous tendons and ligaments. Tendons attach a muscle to the bone, whereas a ligament attaches one bone to another bone. The supraspinatus muscle is responsible for extension of the shoulder joint. Its tendon attaches onto the front part of the humerus bone of the forelimb.

### **Cause of supraspinatus tendinopathy**

Tendonopathy means “disease of a tendon”. Injury to the supraspinatus tendon usually occurs during hunting or other athletic activities. Extreme and rapid hyperflexion of the shoulder is likely the cause of tear or damage to the supraspinatus tendon. The body’s response to the injury is to lay down calcium deposits within the injured tendon. The calcified material in itself is irritating to the dog and can cause pain and lameness. In some dogs, the calcified tendon does not cause any pain, yet other dogs it does.

### **Signs and diagnosis**

The most common sign of a supraspinatus tendinopathy is lameness on the affected limb. Sometimes the lameness is subtle and the owner may only note that the dog is not as powerful on that limb when swimming; thus the dog tends to turn toward the affected limb. Physical examination generally is fairly unremarkable, however, some patients may show signs of pain when the tendon is palpated. X-rays of the shoulder will show a deposit of calcium within the supraspinatus tendon (see photo right). Blood testing is performed prior to surgery to ensure a safe anesthesia.



### **The day of surgery**

Our anesthesia and surgical team will prescribe a pain management program, both during and after surgery that will keep your companion comfortable. This will include a combination of

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general anesthesia, injectable analgesics, oral analgesics and anti-inflammatory medication.

## Treatment

Arthroscopy of the shoulder is frequently recommended to rule out other conditions within the shoulder joint that may be causing lameness. A one incision is made over the side of the affected shoulder. The supraspinatus tendon is exposed, an incision is made into the tendon and the calcified material is removed. After surgery an x-ray is taken to make sure that all calcified material has been removed.

## Aftercare and results

After surgery, you can continue to give your pet a prescribed pain reliever to minimize discomfort. It's also extremely important to limit your dog's activity and exercise level during this post-operative period. Rehabilitation exercises can be done at your home or if you choose, by professionally trained therapists at an animal rehabilitation center. Rehabilitation therapy should be continued for 4 weeks after surgery. Detailed instructions will be given to you after the surgery.

The surgeon will monitor the healing process with two follow-up exams. The first is scheduled for two weeks after the surgery and the second is at eight weeks after the surgery. Most dogs will bear weight on the limb immediately after surgery. Exercise should be limited during the first two months after the procedure. Within eight weeks after surgery, the shoulder usually has healed. Dogs that receive the surgery usually are able to resume working activities such as hunting after complete healing has taken place (about 4 months later).



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# Supraspinatus Tendinopathy Continued...

## Assessment and recommendations

Patient: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Treatment

- Surgery is recommended by a surgeon at MVS
- Surgery is not recommended

### The following has been prescribed

- No medications or special diet are necessary at this time
- Prescription joint diet: \_\_\_\_\_
- Neuroceutical: \_\_\_\_\_
- Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medication: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other medication: \_\_\_\_\_

### Exercise:

- Unlimited
- Confine your pet to the house other than very short leash walks necessary for bowel movements and urination
- Restrict exercise to leash walks 10 minutes twice daily

### Preparation for surgery

- Start fasting your companion at midnight before the surgery; water should not be withheld
- Pepcid AC 10 mg tablets: give \_\_\_\_\_ tablets with water (use a syringe if needed) at 6 AM on the day of surgery
- Other medications: \_\_\_\_\_

*Composed by Daniel A. Degner, DVM, DACVS  
Edited by Ned F. Kuehn, DVM, MS, DACVIM*



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