

For type V AC joint injuries, early surgery may not be the best approach

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Early surgery may not be the best treatment option for patients with Type V AC joint injuries, according to new research from Tripler Army Medical Center. The study, presented today at the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine's (AOSSM) Specialty Day, showed military personnel returned to duty faster when surgery was not performed.

The final study group focused on 24 patients, with 7 receiving [surgical treatment](#) and 17 receiving non-surgical therapy. Of the non-surgery group, 8 patients (53%) returned to active duty an average of 90.3 days without limitations. Of the group receiving immediate surgery 5 patients (83%) returned at an average of 184 days. Of those in non-surgery group who elected for surgery after a trial of physical therapy, 100% returned to full active duty.

"Injuries to the acromioclavicular (AC) joint can completely remove a person from activity," noted corresponding author Major Kevin P. Krul, MD, from Tripler Army Medical Center. "Knowing that patients are having success without surgery and with delayed surgery after a trial of [physical therapy](#) can help us better plan treatment in the future."

The AC joint connects at the top of the shoulder, and is at the center of approximately 3.2% of all shoulder injuries.

Provided by American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine

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