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New procedure for massive rotator cuff tears restores stability better, say researchers

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Repairing massive rotator cuff tears is often a tricky proposition, especially for those who have failed prior surgery. Researchers presenting their work at the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine's (AOSSM) Specialty Day today, discussed how a new arthroscopic procedure to treat large rotator cuff tears may help patients return to sports and work quicker.

"Our work on utilizing an arthroscopic superior capsule reconstruction (ASCR) restored shoulder function at a greater rate than previous forms of treatment and helped return our patients to recreational sport and work faster," said Teruhisa Mihata, MD, PhD from the Osaka Medical College

From 2007-2014, Mihata and his team followed and treated 100 ASCR patients with an average age of 66 years. All of the individuals had irreparable rotator cuff tears that had failed previous treatment. Physical exams, x-rays and MRI were performed prior to surgery and also again at three, six and 12 months following surgery and yearly thereafter. Return to sport and work rates were also analyzed in 34 patients who were employed and 26 patients who were recreational athletes prior to injury.

The average postoperative outcome scores for 92% of these individuals all improved their strength and shoulder function significantly. Thirty-two patients returned fully to their previous work and two patients returned with reduced hours and workloads. All 26 patients who played

sports prior to injury returned fully to their activities.

"Our positive results suggest that this procedure is a viable option for irreparable, large rotator cuff tears. We hope to perform additional research to further solidfy our results," said Mihata.

Provided by American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine