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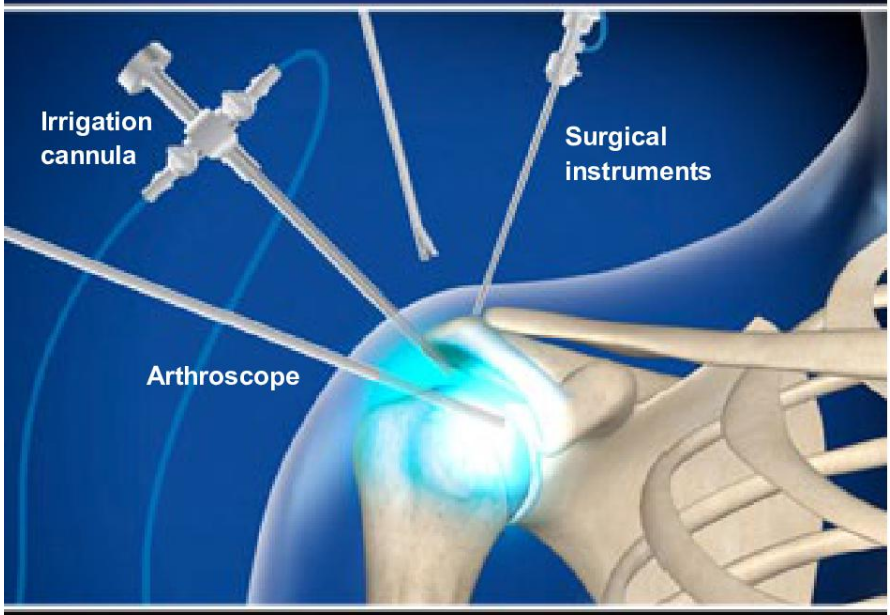
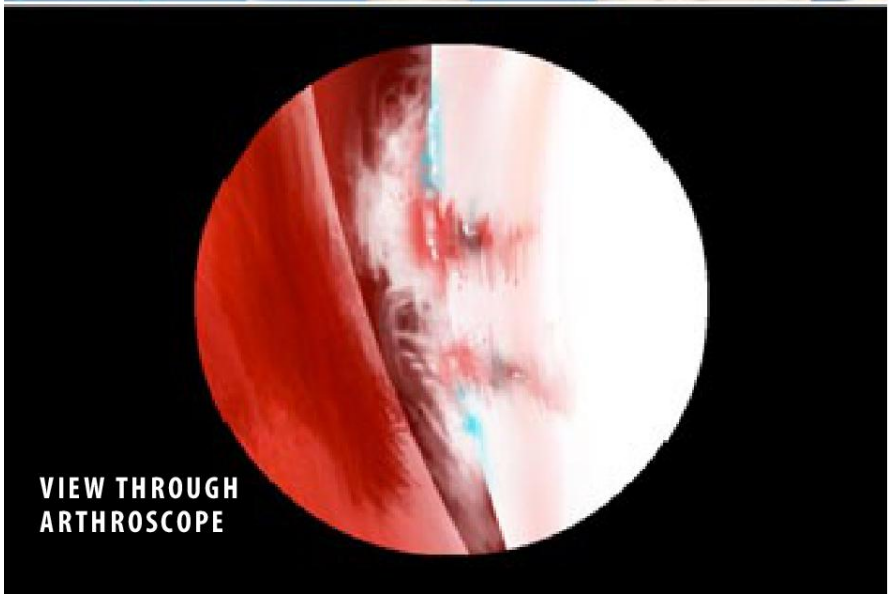
See the video

Diagnostic Arthroscopy (Shoulder)





Overview

This outpatient procedure is a minimally-invasive surgical technique commonly used to identify problems in the shoulder joint. It is performed with the aid of a specialized camera called an arthroscope.

Preparation

In preparation for the procedure, the patient is positioned and anesthesia is administered. A long, thin tube called an irrigation cannula is pushed through the skin and into the shoulder joint. Fluid is pumped through the cannula, inflating and irrigating the joint. This will give the surgeon a clear view of the bones and tissues within the shoulder.

Inserting the Arthroscope

Once the joint is inflated, the surgeon creates a small opening in the shoulder and inserts the arthroscope. The arthroscope is equipped with a light and camera. Images from the arthroscope are displayed on a video screen in the operating room.

Inspecting the Joint

The surgeon carefully moves the camera within the joint, thoroughly inspecting the area for debris and for signs of damage. If the surgeon finds a problem, it can often be corrected during the procedure.

Repairing Damage

To repair damage, the surgeon inserts thin surgical instruments into the joint through additional small incisions. These instruments can be used to smooth out rough areas, grasp and remove debris, place sutures or perform a variety of other repairs.

End of Procedure and Aftercare

When the procedure is complete, the fluid is drained and the instruments are removed. The openings are closed with sutures or surgical tape. The patient will be monitored in a recovery room for one or two hours after surgery. Recovery from arthroscopy is typically faster than recovery from traditional open surgery, but the healing process may take several weeks. Physical therapy may be needed.