

Surgery of the Shoulder

Policy Number: SRST2026T0556GG
Effective Date: April 1, 2026

[Instructions for Use](#)

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Related Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skin and Soft Tissue Substitutes

Coverage Rationale

Surgery of the shoulder is proven and medically necessary in certain circumstances. For medical necessity clinical coverage criteria, refer to the InterQual[®] CP: Procedures:

- Arthroscopy or Arthroscopically Assisted Surgery, Shoulder
- Arthroscopy or Arthroscopically Assisted Surgery, Shoulder (Adolescent)
- Arthroscopy, Diagnostic, +/- Synovial Biopsy, Shoulder
- Joint Replacement, Shoulder
- Removal and Replacement or Revision, Joint Replacement, Shoulder

[Click here to view the InterQual[®] criteria.](#)

Applicable Codes

The following list(s) of procedure and/or diagnosis codes is provided for reference purposes only and may not be all inclusive. Listing of a code in this policy does not imply that the service described by the code is a covered or non-covered health service. Benefit coverage for health services is determined by the member specific benefit plan document and applicable laws that may require coverage for a specific service. The inclusion of a code does not imply any right to reimbursement or guarantee claim payment. Other Policies and Guidelines may apply.

CPT Code	Description
23470	Arthroplasty, glenohumeral joint; hemiarthroplasty
23472	Arthroplasty, glenohumeral joint; total shoulder (glenoid and proximal humeral replacement (e.g., total shoulder)
23473	Revision of total shoulder arthroplasty, including allograft when performed; humeral or glenoid component
23474	Revision of total shoulder arthroplasty, including allograft when performed; humeral and glenoid component
29805	Arthroscopy, shoulder, diagnostic, with or without synovial biopsy (separate procedure)
29806	Arthroscopy, shoulder, surgical; capsulorrhaphy
29807	Arthroscopy, shoulder, surgical; repair of slap lesion
29819	Arthroscopy, shoulder, surgical; with removal of loose body or foreign body
29820	Arthroscopy, shoulder, surgical; synovectomy, partial
29821	Arthroscopy, shoulder, surgical; synovectomy, complete

CPT Code	Description
29822	Arthroscopy, shoulder, surgical; debridement, limited, 1 or 2 discrete structures (e.g., humeral bone, humeral articular cartilage, glenoid bone, glenoid articular cartilage, biceps tendon, biceps anchor complex, labrum, articular capsule, articular side of the rotator cuff, bursal side of the rotator cuff, subacromial bursa, foreign body[ies])
29823	Arthroscopy, shoulder, surgical; debridement, extensive, 3 or more discrete structures (e.g., humeral bone, humeral articular cartilage, glenoid bone, glenoid articular cartilage, biceps tendon, biceps anchor complex, labrum, articular capsule, articular side of the rotator cuff, bursal side of the rotator cuff, subacromial bursa, foreign body[ies])
29824	Arthroscopy, shoulder, surgical; distal claviclectomy including distal articular surface (Mumford procedure)
29825	Arthroscopy, shoulder, surgical; with lysis and resection of adhesions, with or without manipulation
29826	Arthroscopy, shoulder, surgical; decompression of subacromial space with partial acromioplasty, with coracoacromial ligament (i.e., arch) release, when performed (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)
29827	Arthroscopy, shoulder, surgical; with rotator cuff repair
29828	Arthroscopy, shoulder, surgical; biceps tenodesis

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U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

This section is to be used for informational purposes only. FDA approval alone is not a basis for coverage.

Surgeries of the shoulder are procedures and, therefore, not regulated by the FDA. However, devices and instruments used during the surgery may require FDA approval. Refer to the following website for additional information:

<http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cdrh/cfdocs/cfPMN/pmn.cfm>. (Accessed April 22, 2025)

Policy History/Revision Information

Date	Summary of Changes
04/01/2026	<p>Coverage Rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed language indicating subacromial balloon spacers for the treatment of rotator cuff tears are unproven and not medically necessary due to insufficient evidence of efficacy <p>Applicable Codes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed CPT code 29999 <p>Supporting Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated <i>FDA</i> section to reflect the most current information Removed <i>Medical Records Documentation Used for Reviews, Clinical Evidence, and References</i> sections Archived previous policy version 2026T0556FF

Instructions for Use

This Medical Policy provides assistance in interpreting benefit plans. Before using this policy, check the member specific benefit plan document and any applicable federal or state mandates. UnitedHealthcare reserves the right to modify its Policies and Guidelines as necessary. This Medical Policy is provided for informational purposes. It does not constitute medical advice.

UnitedHealthcare may also use tools developed by third parties, such as the InterQual® criteria, to assist us in administering health benefits. UnitedHealthcare Medical Policies are intended to be used in connection with the independent professional medical judgment of a qualified health care provider and do not constitute the practice of medicine or medical advice.