

# Barbotage Therapy

Barbotage therapy is an established technique for the treatment of calcific tendinosis of the rotator cuff whereby a needle is guided through the skin to break up calcifications.

It was first described using X-ray machines but with technological improvements modern ultrasound machines allow a skilled operator to readily 'see' the calcification and assess it in 3 dimensions. This avoids x-rays and allows the doctor to place a needle directly into the calcification.

## During the Appointment:

- Your doctor might ask you to change into a gown. You will then be positioned so that your doctor can easily insert the needle into the affected area.
- Your doctor will clean the area around the injection site. He/She might also apply an anesthetic to numb the area where the needle will be inserted.
- Using the ultrasound image, the needle is guided into the calcification under direct vision. The calcification will then be attempted to be aspirated/withdrawn. To encourage healing the calcification is punctured several times under local anaesthetic. Finally the tendon is bathed in some more local anaesthetic.
- You will likely feel some sort of pressure when the needle is inserted and it can be a painful procedure, although with local anesthetic most people tolerate the procedure. Please inform your doctor if you feel a lot of discomfort.
- Occasionally 2 treatments are needed at about 6 weeks apart; however, and 1/3 of patients may not respond.

## After the Appointment:

- As your arm may feel heavy following the procedure, you should be aware this may impact your ability to drive.
- Avoid exercise to the arms and lifting heavy objects.
- It is advised to schedule a follow-up with your doctor after the procedure to monitor progress.
- Apply ice to the injection site as needed to relieve pain. Don't use heating pads.
- Watch for signs of infection, including increasing pain, redness and swelling that lasts more than 48 hours.
- Don't use a bathtub or hot tub for two days, however you may shower.