

Barbotage for Calcific Tendonitis

The aim of this leaflet is to provide an overview of barbotage for calcific tendonitis and to answer some of the common questions. It does not aim to substitute for a thorough discussion with your surgeon.

Background

Calcific tendonitis is the accumulation of calcium salts in the tendon, and is often a toothpaste consistency rather than a hard lump.

The calcium can cause chemical irritation which leads to pain. It can also reduce the space between the acromion and rotator cuff and lead to a mechanical irritation.

What is Barbotage ?

Barbotage is a procedure performed under ultrasound (US) guidance. It aims to break-up and remove the calcium deposits.

How effective is Barbotage ?

The procedure is usually effective and helping remove / encourage the body to break down the calcium deposit. Sometimes if the calcium is very hard, then surgery may be required. You will be able to discuss this with your surgeon.

How is Barbotage performed ?

It is performed under local anaesthetic as a daycase. An US is used to locate the calcium in the shoulder and then a needle passed and the calcium attempted to be aspirated / withdrawn.

A steroid injection may be performed at the same time. The person doing the procedure will discuss this with you.



Risks of Barbotage

There is a small risk of infection and bleeding. Because local anaesthetic is used there is a risk of an adverse reaction to it, if you are allergic.

It can be painful, although most people tolerate it well. Unfortunately if the calcium is very hard, it may not be possible to aspirate / withdraw it but instead the lump may be attempted to be broken up by the needle.

What to do after the procedure

Barbotage does not weaken your shoulder, but it may be uncomfortable afterwards so it is sensible to have someone drive you to and from the procedure.