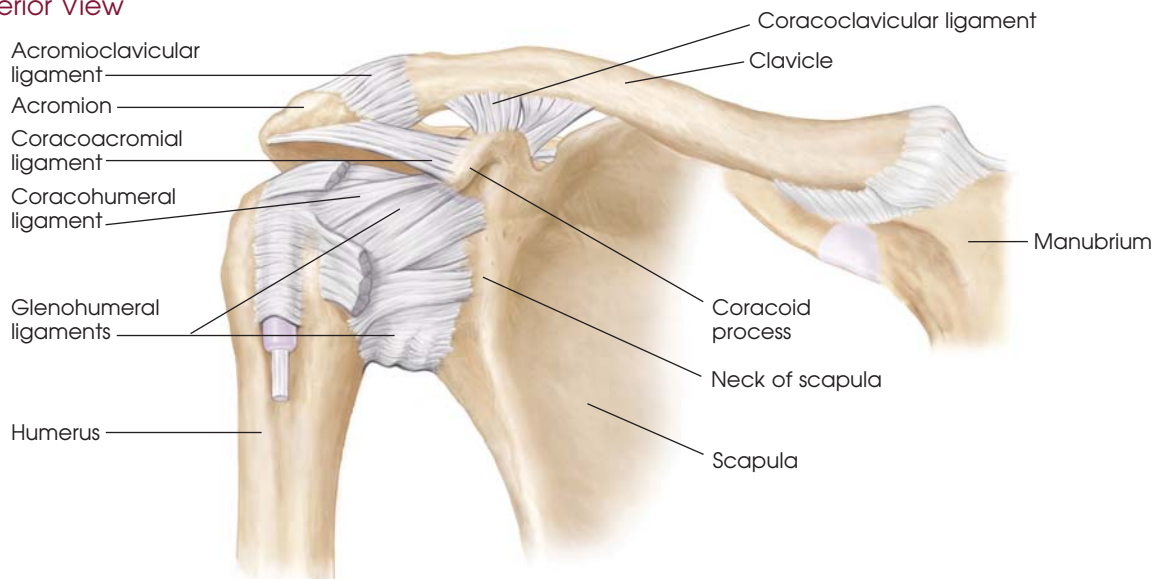
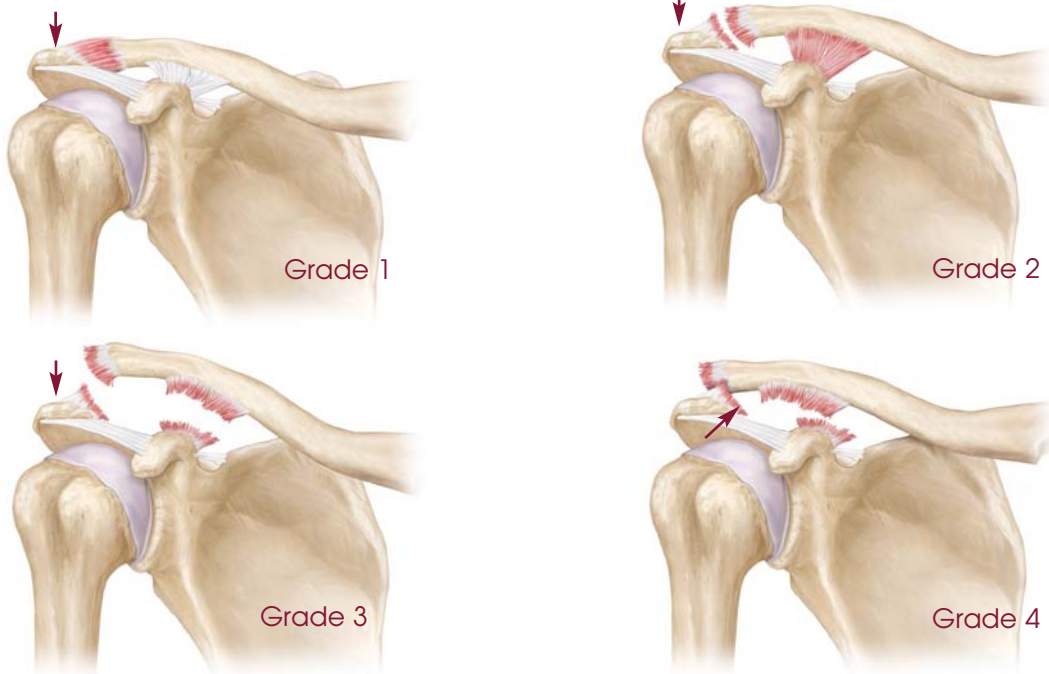


Shoulder (Acromioclavicular) Separation

Normal Shoulder Anatomy: Anterior View



Shoulder Acromioclavicular Separation



Shoulder Separation occurs when the ligaments that hold the collarbone (clavicle) to the scapula of shoulder (acromioclavicular joint) tear. The injury is graded based on the extent of the separation. This injury is caused by a fall on, or blow to the shoulder or falling onto an outstretched hand; and is common in contact sports such as football, rugby, soccer or downhill skiing. Symptoms include severe pain at the time of injury, swelling, bruising and misshapen shoulder.

Common Treatment Options

Treatment will depend on the classification of the injury, which can fall into one of 6 grades of severity.

- Apply ice packs to the shoulder for 20-30 minutes every 3-4 hours for the first 2-3 days until the pain goes away.
- Take pain medications as prescribed by your doctor.
- Wear a sling to immobilize the arm while it heals.
- Surgery is usually required for Grades 4 – 6 and sometimes for a Grade 3 separation. These grades usually have significant deformity.

