

• Spine



• Total Joint



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# John W. Aldridge

M.D., F.A.A.O.S.

Dr. John Aldridge is a Board Certified orthopaedic surgeon who has been specializing in minimally invasive muscle-sparing spinal surgery and total joint replacement surgery in the Hampton Roads area since 2002. He was the first on the Peninsula to perform the AxiaLIF spinal surgery and the Zimmer Gender Specific Total Knee replacement. He is also the lead developer for the instruments used for the anterior total hip replacement technique for a major orthopaedic company.

## Regain Function with Total Shoulder Replacement

John Aldridge, M.D., F.A.A.O.S., has performed thousands of total shoulder replacement surgeries in his 16-year career. He has seen firsthand the positive difference it can make in a person's life.

"For people who are having pain and disability, it is a very successful operation," Dr. Aldridge says. "Patients get very good pain relief and return to near normal shoulder function."

Dr. Aldridge says total shoulder replacement surgery can help patients of any age who have pain or loss of shoulder function that doesn't improve with physical therapy, cortisol injections, or pain medicines. These patients should also have signs of arthritis on X-rays or MRIs.

Some people are at higher risk for arthritis in the shoulder, including people who:

- have had a prior shoulder surgery
- do a lot of physical labor
- have a genetic predisposition for arthritis

But you don't have to have one of these risk factors to develop arthritis or qualify



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"If your shoulder pain is keeping you from doing the things you need to do, you should be evaluated for a replacement," says Dr. Aldridge.

A shoulder replacement works similarly to a hip replacement. During the procedure, Dr. Aldridge places an artificial joint made of metal and plastic. The joint includes a socket placed in the shoulder and a ball placed on the top of the arm bone. The two fit together to act just like your natural shoulder.

However, unlike a hip replacement, a shoulder replacement has to have a greater range of motion. To achieve a full range of motion and function in the shoulder, you must be ready to put in the work.

"There's quite an extensive rehabilitation after shoulder replacement," says Dr. Aldridge. "It is three to six months of exercises after surgery, starting with a therapist for the first couple of months and then doing home exercises."

The main reason for the long rehabilitation is that you may not be using your shoulder much before surgery. This can cause the muscles and tendons to grow weak and stiff. A slow, safe rehabilitation after surgery gets them back into shape.

Though rehabilitation can take months, a joint replacement in your shoulder should last around 15 years. The hard work is worth the result of a pain-free shoulder that allows you to resume the activities you love, whether it's playing sports, going for a swim, or returning to work.