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ROLE OF MAGNETIC RESONANCE IMAGING IN SHOULDER JOINT **LESIONS**

THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement of MD degree

in Radiodiagnosis

By



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INTRODUCTION

Shoulder pain is a common clinical complaint that may be caused by abnormalities of the rotator cuff and a variety of other pathologic conditions. (1) It is well documented that overhead activities place extremely high stresses on the static and dynamic restraints of the glenohumeral joint. This renders the overhead athlete vulnerable to a significant number of shoulder problems. The differential diagnosis is extensive and includes impingement syndrome, instability, tendinosis and rotator cuff pathology, labral lesions, biceps disorders, radiculopathy, and thoracic outlet syndrome. In older patients, arthritis may even be a factor. (2)

Numerous complexities unique to the shoulder make diagnosis challenging for both the primary care physician and the accomplished surgeon. The shoulder is anatomically complex with numerous structures contributing to both the mobility and stability of the joint. Variations of normal anatomy can lead to confusion during arthroscopic diagnosis and treatment. (3) Rotator cuff tears are often hard to diagnose because of muscle atrophy that impairs the patient's ability to perform diagnostic maneuvers. (4) An accurate diagnosis is the essential element of a successful treatment plan in patients who present with shoulder pain. (1)

Diagnostic imaging is important when there is significant uncertainty regarding the cause of shoulder pain and the outcome may be improved by timely implementation of various treatment options. Diagnostic imaging, especially MR imaging, clarifies some diagnostically difficult scenarios by demonstrating both intra-articular and extra-articular anatomy. (3)

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) may help to establish the cause of shoulder pain by accurately depicting the presence and extent of bone and soft tissue pathology about the shoulder. MR imaging provides clinically useful information in detecting and characterizing pathology of the rotator cuff and other shoulder disorders in a noninvasive fashion. (1) MR imaging has the advantages of inherent improved soft-tissue contrast, multiplanar imaging capability, and excellent resolution. It allows the visualization of soft-tissue structures, giving unparalleled contrast with inherent pathologic information without the use of ionizing radiation. (3)

Magnetic resonance imaging has been shown to be an accurate method for accurately evaluating the glenoid labrum. However, using either conventional or arthrographic MRI of the superior labrum has been fraught with error. Continuing advances in surface coil design, computer software, and image processing have resulted in the rapid acquisition of superior quality MR images of the shoulder, yielding increased diagnostic accuracy. (5)

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The aim of this work is to evaluate the role of magnetic resonance imaging in diagnosis of shoulder joint lesions.

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