

Surgery or rehabilitation for traumatic shoulder dislocations

Submission date 06/05/2026	Recruitment status Recruiting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered <input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
Registration date 07/05/2026	Overall study status Ongoing	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input type="checkbox"/> Results
Last Edited 07/05/2026	Condition category Musculoskeletal Diseases	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

The SORTED trial aims to establish the best way to treat young adults who dislocate their shoulders for the first time. This is a common injury, that usually results from an accident whilst playing sport. Currently, there are two main treatments used to minimise the risk of patients dislocating the shoulder again in the future: immediate keyhole surgery, followed by physiotherapy or physiotherapy alone. If a patient's shoulder does not stabilise after an initial dislocation it can lead to ongoing pain, reduced quality of life, and there could be complications like nerve injuries. This trial is crucial in determining the most effective and cost-efficient initial treatment to prevent recurrent instability and its negative consequences.

Who can participate?

Younger people are much more likely to dislocate their shoulders than others, and this trial will focus on people aged 16 to 30 years.

What does the study involve?

Participants will receive either keyhole shoulder surgery followed by rehabilitation, or rehabilitation alone. They will be involved in the study for 15 months and asked to complete questionnaires about their treatment and shoulder recovery at regular intervals.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

Both treatments are standard NHS care and taking part in the study does not add extra risk. Surgery carries known risks such as infection and anaesthetic complications but may reduce the chance of future shoulder dislocations. Non-surgical treatment avoids surgery risks but may increase the chance of the shoulder dislocating again. Rehabilitation exercises may cause temporary discomfort or stiffness.

Where is the study run from?

The University of Oxford (UK)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

May 2026 to April 2033

Who is funding the study?
National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) (UK).

Who is the main contact?
Trial Manager - Miss Hannah Crook
Chief Investigator - Associate Professor Steve Gwilym
sorted@ndorms.ox.ac.uk

Contact information

Type(s)
Public, Scientific, Principal investigator

Contact name
Miss Hannah Crook

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Additional identifiers

Integrated Research Application System (IRAS)
348387

Central Portfolio Management System (CPMS)
64362

National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR)
167370

Study information

Scientific Title
SORTED – a randomised controlled superiority trial comparing the clinical and cost-effectiveness of the addition of surgery to a patient’s treatment pathway versus non-operative rehabilitation alone for young adult patients with a first-time shoulder dislocation

Acronym
SORTED

Study objectives
Primary Objective - Shoulder function as reported by the participant at 15 months post-randomisation using the Oxford Shoulder Instability Score (OSIS)

Secondary Objectives:

1. Shoulder function (OSIS) at Baseline (pre-injury), 3, 6, 9 and 12 months post-randomisation
2. Health related quality of life (EQ-5D-5L) at Baseline (pre and post injury), 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15 months post randomisation
3. Cost and comparative cost-effectiveness (bespoke participant resource use questionnaire) at 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15 months post-randomisation
4. Complications, including re-dislocation, reported by participants at 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15 months post-randomisation and sites at 6 and 15 months post-randomisation
5. Fear of movement and return to sport (SIRSI) at 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15 months post-randomisation
6. Shoulder function satisfaction (bespoke participant questionnaire) at Baseline (pre-injury), 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15 months post-randomisation
7. Long-term rate of re-dislocation and further surgery up to 5 years post-randomisation via linkage to NHS digital (or equivalent)

Ethics approval required

Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)

approved 23/04/2026, London - Camden & Kings Cross Research Ethics Committee (2 Redman Place, Stratford, London, E20 1JQ, United Kingdom; +44 207 104 8086; CamdenandKingsCross.REC@hra.nhs.uk), ref: 26/LO/0248

Study design

Interventional randomized controlled trial

Primary study design

Interventional

Study type(s)

Treatment

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Shoulder dislocation

Interventions

The trial is a multi-centre, 2-arm, parallel design, superiority randomised controlled trial with an embedded internal pilot (first six months of recruitment).

The trial (including the internal pilot) will recruit 276 patients (138 in each of two groups) with a first-time shoulder dislocation from a minimum of 20 sites in the UK. Participants will be individually randomised (1:1) to receive either arthroscopic shoulder stabilisation + shoulder stability rehabilitation or shoulder stability rehabilitation alone.

Participants will be followed up for 15 months post-randomisation.

Patients considered potentially eligible will be approached by their usual care team on behalf of the research team or if their usual care team is also part of the site research team, they may discuss the trial directly with the patient. They will be provided with a Participant Information Sheet (PIS) and a link to the trial website/trial explainer animation. For those patients that are potentially interested in learning more, they will be directed to contact the local site research team to discuss further. If they wish to proceed with participation they will provide informed consent.

Participants will then complete baseline questionnaires based on how they were feeling before their injury (answered retrospectively) and how they are feeling today. Participants will then be randomised to either treatment group and followed up at 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15 months post-randomisation.

Data will be collected via the clinical trial IT system REDCap, hosted by the University of Oxford, UK. Baseline demographic data will be entered directly by the site staff during the initial visit, and all baseline questionnaire data will be entered directly by the participant. Participants will then be contacted for follow-up to complete questionnaires through an online link. Telephone and postal follow-up will be conducted for those who require it. Follow-up will be conducted centrally by the trial team.

Intervention Type

Mixed

Primary outcome(s)

1. Shoulder function measured using Oxford Shoulder Instability Score (OSIS) at 15 months post-randomisation

Key secondary outcome(s)

1. Shoulder function measured using Oxford Shoulder Instability Score (OSIS) at Baseline (pre-injury), 3, 6, 9 and 12 months post-randomisation

2. Health related quality of life measured using EQ5D5L at Baseline (pre- and post-injury), 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15 months

3. Rate of re-dislocation measured using Occurrence of shoulder re-dislocation at Up to 15 months

4. Rate of complications measured using Site and participant reported complications at 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15 months (participant); 6 & 15 months (site)

5. Fear of movement and return to sport measured using Shortened SIRSI Score at 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15 months

6. Cost and comparative cost effectiveness measured using Cost, Quality Adjusted Life Year (QALY), Incremental Cost Effectiveness Ratio (ICER) at 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15 months

7. Shoulder function satisfaction measured using Shoulder function satisfaction score at Baseline (pre-injury), 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15 months

8. Long term rate of re-dislocation & further surgery measured using Re-dislocation events and further surgery at Up to 5 years

Completion date

30/04/2033

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

1. Aged between 16 and 30 years old
2. Medical imaging confirms dislocation of the shoulder

Healthy volunteers allowed

No

Age group

Mixed

Lower age limit

16 years

Upper age limit

30 years

Sex

All

Total final enrolment

0

Key exclusion criteria

1. Injury is more than 28 days old
2. The dislocation is recurrent
3. The dislocation is atraumatic
4. Patient has bilateral shoulder dislocations
5. Patient is unable to adhere to trial interventions or follow-up

If further imaging is done for clinical reasons, additional exclusion criteria will apply:

6. Medical imaging suggests bone loss off the glenoid > 20% its diameter.
7. The shoulder dislocation is associated with a fracture of the humeral head (other than a "Hill-Sachs" fracture)
8. Evidence of full thickness rotator cuff tear, Humeral avulsion of the glenohumeral ligament, lesion or a labral tear that extends all the way around the glenoid (pan-labral tear)

Date of first enrolment

11/05/2026

Date of final enrolment

31/01/2028

Locations**Countries of recruitment**

United Kingdom

England

Study participating centre

Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Cambridge Biomedical Campus
Hills Road
Cambridge
England
CB2 0QQ

Study participating centre
Airedale NHS Foundation Trust
Airedale General Hospital
Skipton Road
Steeton
Keighley
England
BD20 6TD

Study participating centre
Ayrshire and Arran
Ailsa Hospital
Dalmellington Road
Ayr
Scotland
KA6 6AB

Study participating centre
Barts Health NHS Trust
The Royal London Hospital
80 Newark Street
London
England
E1 2ES

Study participating centre
County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust
Darlington Memorial Hospital
Hollyhurst Road
Darlington
England
DL3 6HX

Study participating centre

University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Foundation Trust

Royal Derby Hospital
Uttoxeter Road
Derby
England
DE22 3NE

Study participating centre

Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hos
Aldermaston Road
Basingstoke
England
RG24 9NA

Study participating centre

Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Standing Way
Eaglestone
Milton Keynes
England
MK6 5LD

Study participating centre

North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust

Peterborough City Hospital
Bretton Gate
Bretton
Peterborough
England
PE3 9GZ

Study participating centre

University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust

Queen Elizabeth Hospital
Mindelsohn Way
Edgbaston
Birmingham
England
B15 2GW

Study participating centre
Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust
Royal Cornwall Hospital
Treliske
Truro
England
TR1 3LJ

Study participating centre
Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust
Trust Headquarters
East Surrey Hospital
Canada Avenue
Redhill
England
RH1 5RH

Study participating centre
Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
John Radcliffe Hospital
Headley Way
Headington
Oxford
England
OX3 9DU

Study participating centre
King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Denmark Hill
London
England
SE5 9RS

Study participating centre
University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust - Octave Duo Covid19 Trials
Leicester Royal Infirmary
Infirmary Square
Leicester
England
LE1 5WW

Sponsor information

Organisation

University of Oxford

ROR

<https://ror.org/052gg0110>

Funder(s)

Funder type

Government

Funder Name

National Institute for Health and Care Research

Alternative Name(s)

National Institute for Health Research, NIHR Research, NIHRresearch, NIHR - National Institute for Health Research, NIHR (The National Institute for Health and Care Research), NIHR

Funding Body Type

Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype

National government

Location

United Kingdom

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

IPD sharing plan summary

Data sharing statement to be made available at a later date