

THE 28 TOP NORTH AMERICAN SHOULDER SURGEONS

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Separated shoulder or severe shoulder sprain...who do the best want treating them? Here are the answers! Shoulder surgeons at the top of their game let us know their thoughts on the best orthopedic surgeons in their subspecialty.

Here is that list. We don't have "the market" on lists...this isn't the be-all and end-all list—but it is a list of the most impressive shoulder surgeons in North America. This information was obtained via a telephone survey of thought leaders in the field. The information in quotes is what we heard about these surgeons.


In alphabetical order, here are the top 28 shoulder surgeons in North America.

Christopher S. Ahmad, M.D.

Dr. Ahmad is associate professor of Clinical Orthopaedic Surgery at Columbia University and an associate attending in Orthopaedic Surgery at New York Presbyterian Hospital. "He is the head team physician for the Yankees, and is also known for doing very good basic science studies of the methods of rotator cuff repair. His computer aided shoulder replacement studies are also very interesting."

April D. Armstrong, M.D.

Dr. Armstrong is associate professor of Orthopaedic Shoulder and Elbow Surgery at Penn State Hershey Bone and Joint Institute in Pennsylvania. She is also vice-chair of quality of the Department of Orthopaedics, as well as associate chief medical officer for surgery with Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Group. "Her research on shoulder replacement has highlighted glenoid imaging, something that is very new. And she is doing excellent work in her administrative position where she is in charge of quality measures for the department of orthopedics."

 **George Athwal, M.D., F.R.C.S.C**

Dr. Athwal is an orthopedic surgeon at the University of Western Ontario in Canada. “He is a younger, but very well respected surgeon who is increasingly invited to speak at international meetings. He is doing innovative research in shoulder instability and elbow replacement.”

 **John-Erik Bell, M.D., M.S.**

Dr. Bell is an orthopedic surgeon with Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in New Hampshire. He is also assistant professor in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery and The Dartmouth Institute. “He is exceptional, and is the only shoulder and elbow surgeon in that area of the U.S. doing complex surgery. He is an incredible teacher and has stimulated a lot of Dartmouth residents to go into shoulder and elbow. He does a nice job of combining the clinical and educational aspects of being an academic shoulder and elbow surgeon.”

 **Jonathan P. Braman, M.D.**

Dr. Braman is assistant professor in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the University of Minnesota. “He is a rising star and a great surgeon. He is heavily dedicated to education, and is the resident education section leader for shoulder and elbow.”

 **Stephen S. Burkhart, M.D.**

Dr. Burkhart is an orthopedic surgeon with The San Antonio Orthopaedic Group in Texas. He is also clinical associate professor in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio and clinical associate professor at Baylor College of Medicine. He is a past president of the Arthroscopy Association of North America. “He is a pioneer in arthroscopy, and is well known for his interesting concepts of the biomechanics of rotator cuff repair. He is a very clear thinker and a great educator.”

 **Brian J. Cole, M.D.**

Dr. Cole is an orthopedic surgeon at Midwest Orthopaedics at Rush, as well as professor in the Departments of Orthopaedics and Anatomy and Cell Biology. Dr. Cole is section head of the Cartilage Restoration Center at Rush (Rush University Medical Center). “His novel shoulder techniques have really advanced what we can do for our patients. He is widely known for his exceptional cartilage work.”

 **Edward V. Craig, M.D., M.P.H.**

Dr. Craig is an orthopedic surgeon at Hospital for Special Surgery in New York and professor of Clinical Surgery (Orthopaedics) at Weill Cornell Medical College. Dr. Craig is a past president of the American Shoulder and Elbow Society (ASES). “He is a spectacular physician and surgeon. He is a tremendous leader in shoulder surgery.”

 **T. Bradley Edwards, M.D.**

Dr. Edwards is an orthopedic surgeon with Fondren Orthopedic Group, LLC in Dallas, Texas. He is a clinical instructor in the Department of Orthopedic Surgery at the University of Texas Health Sciences Center at Houston and a clinical assistant professor in the Department of Orthopedic Surgery at Baylor University. He is Attending Faculty, Shoulder and Elbow Surgery Fellowship at the University of Texas Health Sciences Center at Houston. “He is one of the ‘go to’ guys for shoulder surgery. He is known for arthroscopy and for doing revisions for instability. He is a well rounded thinker who considers all aspects of the situation. He is the founder of the Houston Shoulder Society.”

 **Neal S. Elattrache, M.D.**

Dr. Elattrache is an orthopedic surgeon and director of the Sports Medicine Fellowship at the Kerlan Jobe Orthopedic Clinic in Los Angeles. He is also associate clinical professor in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the University of Southern California. “He is a good decision maker and is excellent at managing patients. He is very good technically, and his research on rotator cuff repair techniques is very clinically relevant.”

 **Evan Flatow, M.D.**

Dr. Flatow is the Bernard J. Lasker Professor and chair of the Department of Orthopaedics and chief of shoulder surgery at The Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York. Dr. Flatow is a past president of the ASES. “He is an outstanding educator and researcher who is known for important prospective studies on rotator cuff surgery.”

 **Mark A. Frankle, M.D.**

Dr. Frankle is an orthopedic surgeon with Florida Orthopaedic Institute in Tampa and director of the Biomechanical Shoulder and Elbow Research Lab at the University of South Florida College of Engineering. “He is a gifted surgeon who has an excellent understanding of implant biomechanics. He is a unique thinker and has been extensively involved with implant development.”

 **Leesa M. Galatz, M.D.**

Dr. Galatz is associate professor of Orthopedic Surgery and program director of the Shoulder and Elbow Fellowship at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. "She has an extensive knowledge of a wide range of shoulder problems, and is an excellent clinician. She is a genuine leader in our field."

 **Laurence Higgins, M.D.**

Dr. Higgins is chief of the Sports Medicine/Shoulder Service in the Department of Orthopedic Surgery at the Brigham and Women's Hospital. He is the Fellowship Director for the Brigham and Women's/Massachusetts General Shoulder and Elbow Fellowship Program. "He can handle the full spectrum shoulder problems, and is a real leader in the economics of shoulder care. He is well known for being both a sports shoulder surgeon and for his arthroplasty work...not many surgeons do both well."

 **Joseph P. Iannotti, M.D., Ph.D.**

Dr. Iannotti is chairman of the Orthopaedic and Rheumatologic Institute at Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland. He is also co-director of the Orthopaedic Research Center and has a joint appointment in the Department of Biomedical Engineering. Dr. Iannotti is a past president of the ASES. "I think he is the best shoulder researcher on earth. He is a very creative thinker and a finisher."

 **Jay D. Keener, M.D.**

Dr. Keener is assistant professor of orthopedic surgery at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. "He is widely known for his expertise on the management of rotator cuff tears. Additionally, he has brought a lot of clarity to the natural history of rotator cuff tears and their post-operative rehabilitation."

 **Keith Kenter, M.D.**

Dr. Kenter is associate professor of orthopedic surgery at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. He is associate professor of physical medicine and rehabilitation at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, and is also director of the Orthopaedic Surgery Residency Program. "He is an excellent shoulder surgeon, he does a large volume of surgeries and is a passionate educator. He is helping to design a novel curricula for educating trainees in the shoulder content domain."

 **W. Ben Kibler, M.D., F.A.C.S.M.**

Dr. Kibler is the medical director for at the Lexington Clinic in Kentucky. He is also a former vice president of the American College of Sports Medicine. “His knowledge of the biomechanics of the shoulder and of the scapula is extremely impressive. He is quite an innovator in terms of thinking of scapular function in overhead throwing athletes.”

 **William N. Levine, M.D.**

Dr. Levine is professor of clinical orthopedic surgery at Columbia University in New York. He is also vice chairman of education in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at Columbia, as well as director of sports medicine. In addition, Dr. Levine serves as associate director of the Center for Shoulder, Elbow & Sports Medicine and director of the orthopedic surgery residency program at Columbia University Medical Center. “He is a great surgeon who has an in-depth knowledge of the nuances of shoulder surgery. He has written extensively, including numerous textbooks on shoulder surgery.”

 **Peter J. Millet, M.D., M.S.C.**

Dr. Millet is an orthopedic surgeon and partner at the Steadman Clinic in Vail, Colorado. He also serves as a shoulder and sports medicine consultant to the country of Bermuda. “He is a true innovator in the realm of arthroscopy. He has developed a number of novel approaches to teach other surgeons how to do things. He is especially well known for handling sternoclavicular injuries, and is a respected sports shoulder surgeon.”

 **Bradford O. Parsons, M.D.**

Dr. Parsons is assistant professor and residency program director in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the Mount Sinai hospital in New York. “He is a superstar, and is technically very gifted. He is a great researcher, especially in the areas of arthroplasty and rotator cuff repair.”

 **Anthony A. Romeo, M.D.**

Dr. Romeo is an orthopedic surgeon at Midwest Orthopaedics at Rush. He is also associate professor and director in the section of Shoulder & Elbow at Rush University Medical Center. “He is a true innovator, and has validated a lot of principles of shoulder arthroplasty. He is also a super educator in that he can distill complex topics down to their basic elements. He has also contributed much to the field through his numerous publications.”

 **Felix H. “Buddy” Savoie, III, M.D.**

Dr. Savole is chief of the section of sports medicine and professor of clinical orthopedics at Tulane University in New Orleans. He is a past president of the Arthroscopy Association of North America. "There is no one better than Buddy. He is a wonderful surgeon who is known for arthroscopic surgery and can do things that others cannot. He is a great speaker and administrator."

 **John W. Sperling, M.D.**

Dr. Sperling is professor of orthopedics at Mayo Clinic in Minnesota. "He is known for being an outstanding researcher and a true innovator. He has played a major role in designing a shoulder replacement system. He is an excellent speaker and a wonderful physician."

 **Robert Z. Tashjian, M.D.**

Dr. Tashjian is associate professor of orthopedic surgery at the University of Utah. "He is doing some very unique, well thought-out research on the genetics of rotator cuff disease. He is quite a good surgeon, and a very sought after speaker."

 **Jon J.P. Warner, M.D.**

Dr. Warner is chief of the Harvard Shoulder Service and co-director of the Harvard Shoulder and Elbow Fellowship. He is also professor of orthopedic surgery at Harvard Medical School, and a past president of the ASES. "He does important translational research and has terrific clinical judgment. He brings an objective academic approach to managing patients."

 **Russell F. Warren, M.D.**

Dr. Warren is surgeon-in-chief at Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS). He is an attending orthopedic surgeon at HSS and a professor of orthopedic surgery at Weill Cornell Medical College. He is a past president of the ASES, as well as the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine. "He has tremendous experience and insight, and is known for his work on sports injuries in the shoulder. He has invented multiple devices for shoulder replacement."

 **Gerald R. Williams, Jr., M.D.**

Dr. Williams is director of the Shoulder and Elbow Center at Rothman Institute in Philadelphia and professor of orthopedic surgery at Jefferson Medical College. He is a past president of ASES. "He is known for being a great educator and an outstanding technician. He can do live surgery with a skill that rivals anyone in the country. He has been a tremendous, thoughtful mentor to many fellows, and has a good vision of where the field of shoulder and elbow surgery should go."

