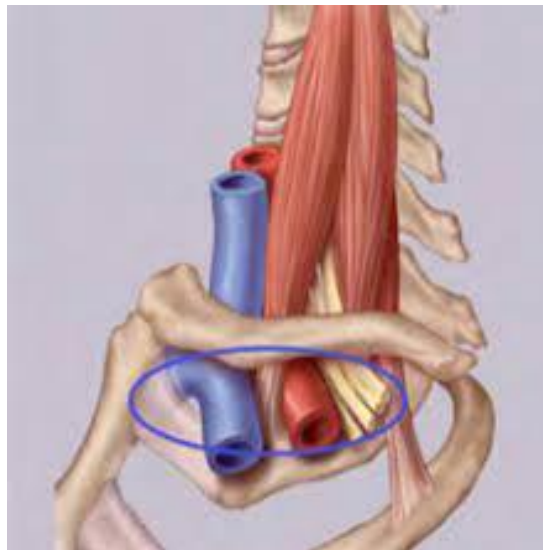


THORACIC OUTLET SYNDROME (TOS)

WHAT IS THORACIC OUTLET SYNDROME (TOS)?

This is a group of symptoms that occur when there is a narrowing of the space (passage) between the clavicle, the scalene muscle (located in the neck), and the first rib. This compresses structures in the narrow passageway, such as blood vessels (veins and arteries) and nerves.

See the circled image:



WHAT ARE THE CAUSES?

The exact cause of thoracic outlet syndrome is often unknown. Anatomical abnormalities can sometimes be responsible:

- An additional small rib (cervical rib) that compresses an artery
- An abnormal rib in the chest
- A poorly healed fracture of the clavicle
- An anomaly of the scalene muscle

DIFFERENT SYMPTOMS DEPENDING ON THE AREA COMPRESSED

NEUROGENIC THORACIC OUTLET SYNDROME

This occurs when the **nerves** are compressed. This causes pain and tingling sensations that usually start in the neck or shoulder and then spread along the inner surface of the arm and in the hand.

ARTERIAL THORACIC OUTLET SYNDROME

This occurs when the **artery** is compressed. The compression damages the arterial wall, which can result in an aneurysm of the artery or decrease circulation in the arm.

VENOUS THORACIC OUTLET SYNDROME

This occurs when the **vein** is compressed. It presents as a clot that causes severe swelling in the arm. The hand and shoulder may also swell; sometimes the skin takes on a bluish tinge.

TREATMENT OF THORACIC OUTLET SYNDROME

Physiotherapy and painkillers help relieve symptoms, but surgery is sometimes necessary.

NEUROGENIC THORACIC OUTLET SYNDROME

This condition can be treated without surgery in 95% of cases. Physiotherapy and pain medication usually solve the problem.

ARTERIAL THORACIC OUTLET SYNDROME

Surgery can slow down this process. In some cases, the diseased segment of the artery can be replaced.

VENOUS THORACIC OUTLET SYNDROME

Medication is initially used to dissolve the clot. Surgery can then be used to prevent a recurrence.

Regardless of the type of TOS, when surgery is required, it involves removing the first rib and cutting the anterior scalene muscle through an incision above the clavicle. This procedure creates space for the blood vessels (artery and vein) and the nerve.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS



Contact our team at 819-346-1110, extension 13085.



If you are concerned about your condition, go to the emergency room.

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Revision and Layout

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