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CAT Block 2

Reference: Alsup C, et al. "My Arm Looks Like Popeye's": A Case Report of Biceps Tendon Rupture. Journal of Emergency Medicine. 2014; Vol 46, No 5, pp 689-690.

Case Presentation: 76 y/o w/ 3 week history of right arm pain and swelling. Started after catching a falling suitcase and feeling a pop. The patient also noted significant swelling to the R upper arm. On exam distal pain and sensory intact. Only notable physical exam finding was 4/5 strength with elbow flexion and forearm pronation and supination. X-rays were neg. Pt was dx with tear of the long head of the Biceps Brachii.

Notable teaching points: Proximal biceps tendon ruptures make up 96% and distal ruptures are rare. Usually occurs in men 40-60 but can also be in young male athletes. Other risk factors are h/o arthritis, statin use or previous shoulder injuries. The dominant arm is most commonly involved.

Treatment options: If treated conservatively pt will lose 8-16% of their flexion strength and 11-21% of supination strength. This is not noted to significantly affect activities of daily living. The other option is surgical repair. This is usually recommended for young or athletic individuals.
