

Extremities Feature



Image created by RRY Publications, LLC / Photography by Andrew Huth

20 OF THE TOP NORTH AMERICAN SHOULDER SURGEONS: 2015

Elizabeth Hofheinz, M.P.H., M.Ed. • Thu, May 21st, 2015

[Print this article](#)

Whether it's severe arthritis or an excruciating rotator cuff tear, patients need the best. We turned to orthopedic thought leaders to learn their impressions of some of the top North American shoulder surgeons.

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 some shoulder surgeons who are making news for their innovation, leadership, and clinical excellence. 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 20 among the best shoulder surgeons in North America:

★ **Christopher S. Ahmad, M.D.**

Dr. Ahmad is Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery and Vice Chair of Research in the Department of Orthopedic Surgery at Columbia University in New York. "He is caring, thoughtful and precise in his thinking and decision-making. He has excellent clinical judgment."

★ **David W. Altchek, M.D.**

Dr. Altchek is Attending Orthopaedic Surgeon and Co-Chief Emeritus in the Sports Medicine & Shoulder Service at Hospital for Special Surgery. He is also Professor of Surgery in Clinical Orthopaedics at the Weill Cornell Medical College. "He is a leader in arthroscopic shoulder surgery with tremendous experience treating professional and high level overhead athletes. Dr. Altchek has also made important contributions to shoulder surgery through his numerous publications."

★ **James P. Bradley, M.D., M.S.**

Dr. Bradley is a sports medicine specialist with Burke & Bradley Orthopedics at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. He is also Clinical Professor of Orthopedic Surgery at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. "He has done extensive research and has great surgical experience regarding shoulder instability in athletes...especially posterior instability in contact athletes."

★ **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. He is a past president of the Arthroscopy Association of North America (AANA). "Dr. Burkhart is an innovator and pioneer in the field of shoulder surgery and is among the most published authors on the topic of arthroscopic shoulder surgery."

★ **Lyle Cain, Jr., M.D.**

Dr. Cain is an orthopedic surgeon with the Andrews Sports Medicine & Orthopaedic Center in Birmingham, Alabama. "He is technically excellent and has made extensive contributions to clinical research regarding the throwing shoulder. He has also made important contributions to injury prevention in youth athletes."

★ **John Conway, M.D.**

Dr. Conway is an orthopedic surgeon with Texas Health Physicians in Fort Worth, Texas. He is also Medical Director for Ben Hogan Sports Therapy Institute at Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital Fort Worth. "He is an outstanding sports shoulder surgeon, and is well respected for his work on shoulder instability, rotator cuff and biceps tendon problems in athletes. He's a real expert with throwers' shoulders. One of the best."

★ **Patrick J. Denard, M.D.**

Dr. Denard is an orthopedic surgeon at Southern Oregon Orthopedics, Inc. "At a very young age, Dr. Denard has produced an extensive body of work that is helping to set the standard of care in arthroscopic shoulder surgery. Now he is expanding his areas of research to include very important work in arthroplasty and biomechanics of the shoulder. From a technical standpoint, he is a very gifted surgeon."

★ **Jeffrey R. Dugas, M.D.**

Dr. Dugas is an orthopedic surgeon with the Andrews Sports Medicine & Orthopaedic Center in Birmingham, Alabama. "He is very active in research and teaching regarding shoulder injuries in athletes. He has contributed to youth injury prevention programs of the shoulder and elbow."

★ **Neal S. ElAttrache, M.D.**

Dr. ElAttrache is an orthopedic surgeon and a member of the Kerlan-Jobe Orthopaedic Clinic board of directors. He is Chairman of the Board of the Kerlan-Jobe Orthopaedic Foundation and Program Director for the Kerlan-Jobe Fellowship. "Dr. ElAttrache is a leader in arthroscopic shoulder surgery with tremendous experience treating high level overhead athletes."

★ **Bassem T. Elhassan, M.D.**

Dr. Elhassan is an orthopedic surgeon and Associate Professor of Orthopedics at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. "He is first and foremost an innovator of care for problems affecting the upper extremity. He has developed new surgical procedures which will benefit patients with paralysis and muscle dysfunction around the shoulder joint."

★ **Laurence D. 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 is an amazing surgeon with exceptional arthroscopic skills and research activities. This is evident from what he has shown in meetings and in surgery, and his patients' outcomes. He did work with J.P. Warner on 3D evaluation of shoulder motion and function after shoulder arthroplasty. Also, he is currently finishing his masters of engineering at MIT, which is going to even solidify his control on his research projects."

★ **Evan S. Lederman, M.D.**

Dr. Lederman is an orthopedic surgeon and President of The Orthopedic Clinic Association (TOCA) in Phoenix, Arizona. He is also Chief of the Shoulder Service for the Banner Good Samaritan Orthopedic Sports Medicine Fellowship and Clinical Associate Professor of Orthopedic Surgery at the University of Arizona. "Evan has developed innovative shoulder arthroplasty designs and techniques, excelled as a teacher of residents, fellows, and his peers, and has been a leader in his community for shoulder care."

★ **Ian Lo, M.D.**

Dr. Lo is an orthopedic surgeon and Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Medicine, Department of Surgery, at the University of Calgary. "He is probably the most accomplished arthroscopic shoulder surgeon in Canada. In addition to being very technically adept in the operating room, he has coauthored many of the groundbreaking research studies in the realm of shoulder arthroscopy."

★ **Pearce McCarty, III, M.D.**

Dr. McCarty is an orthopedic surgeon and President/CEO of Sports and Orthopaedic Specialists in Minneapolis, Minnesota. "Pearce has been a great asset for the Minnesota Twins and a number of NCAA teams in providing state-of-the-art shoulder care. He has mastered a number of challenging skills, include complex revision surgery and the treatment of high level professional athletes."

★ **Peter J. Millett, M.D., M.Sc.**

Dr. Millett is an orthopedic surgeon and partner at the Steadman Clinic in Vail, Colorado. "He has a terrific commitment to research and clinical excellence. His motion studies in the shoulder—as well as his arthroplasty research—truly stand out."

★ **George A. Paletta, Jr., M.D.**

Dr. Paletta is an orthopedic surgeon at The Orthopedic Center of St. Louis. "Dr. Paletta has been treating high level overhead athletes with injuries to the shoulder for over 20 years. He is a demonstrated leader and innovator in the field of surgery in these athletes."

★ **Matthew T. Provencher, M.D.,**

Dr. Provencher is Chief of the Sports Medicine Service at the Brigham and Women's Hospital and a Visiting Professor at Harvard Medical School. "Dr. Provencher is an exceptional shoulder surgeon and arthroscopist, a nationally recognized expert in the care of shoulder problems in both athletes and elite special ops military personal, and a preeminent leader in the research currently being done on shoulder instability complicated by bone loss."

★ **Anthony A. Romeo, M.D.**

Dr. Romeo is an orthopedic surgeon at Midwest Orthopaedics at Rush. He is also Professor and Director in the Section of Shoulder & Elbow at Rush University Medical Center. "Dr. Romeo is an excellent surgeon who is very experienced in both arthroscopic surgery and shoulder replacement surgery. He has great judgment and skill."

★ **Felix H. "Buddy" Savoie, III, M.D.**

Dr. Savoie is Chief of the Section of Sports Medicine and Professor of Clinical Orthopaedics at Tulane University in New Orleans. He is a past president of the AANA. "Dr. Savoie is a leader in the field of arthroscopic surgery and has treated many high level athletes through the years. He is responsible for many of the new innovative surgical techniques in the shoulder and is known as a gifted arthroscopic surgeon."

★ **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 Orthopaedic Surgery at Harvard Medical School, and a past president of the American Shoulder and Elbow Society. "Dr. Warner is among the most talented and thoughtful shoulder specialists in the country. He has tremendous experience with the toughest cases and takes a scientific approach to advance our field."