

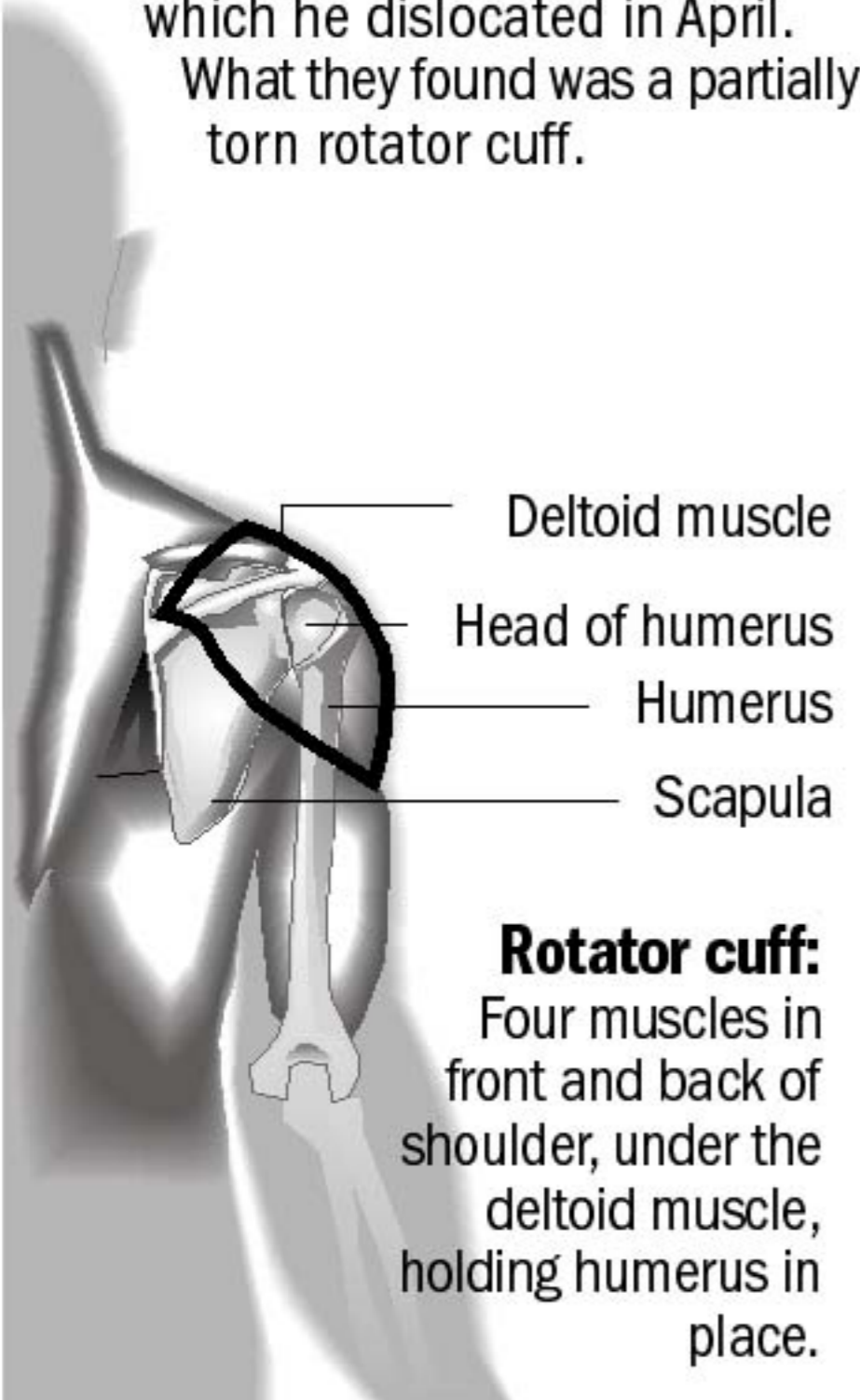
Repairing the damage

Center fielder Ken Griffey Jr. and pitcher Ryan Dempster each underwent surgery Monday. Griffey was to have a partial tear in his rotator cuff repaired and Dempster was to have a bone chip removed. Once the surgeries began, each player was found to have a more severe problem than originally thought.

Griffey Jr.

Partially torn rotator cuff

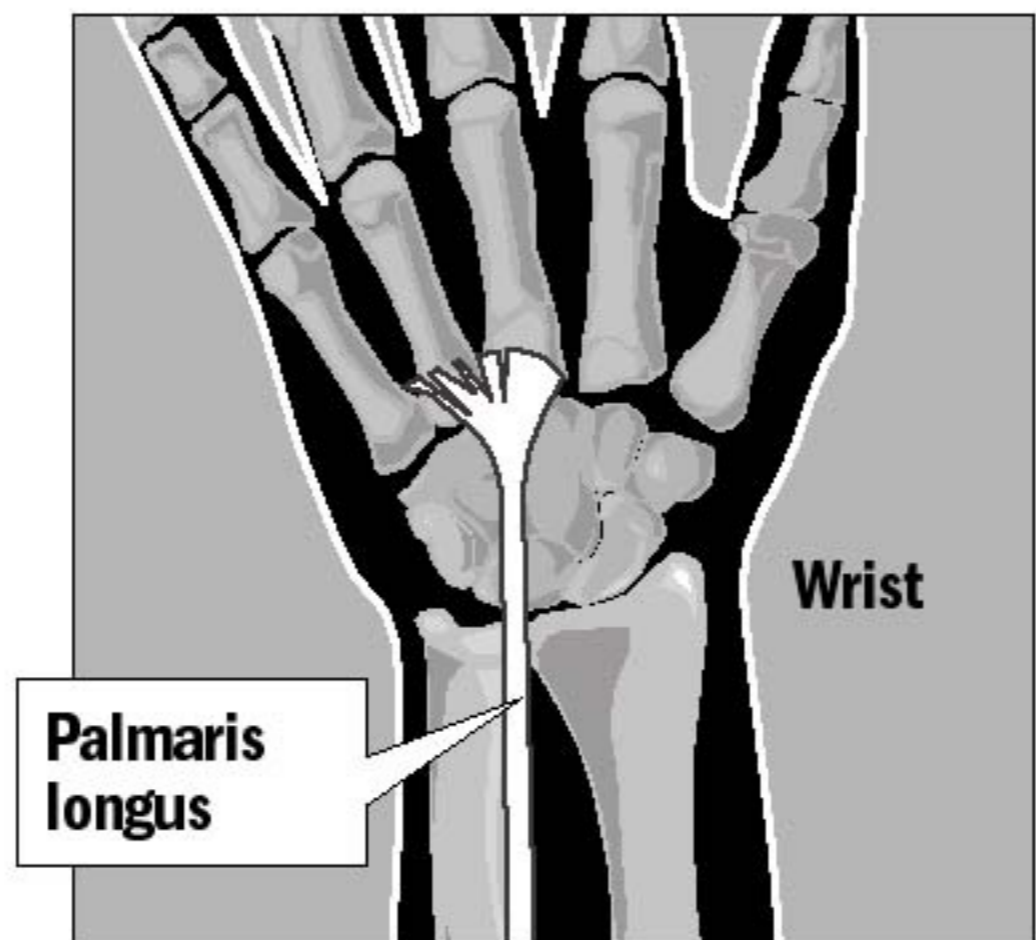
Junior was already out for the season with a ruptured tendon in his right ankle. Doctors planned to repair a torn labrum in his right shoulder, which he dislocated in April. What they found was a partially torn rotator cuff.



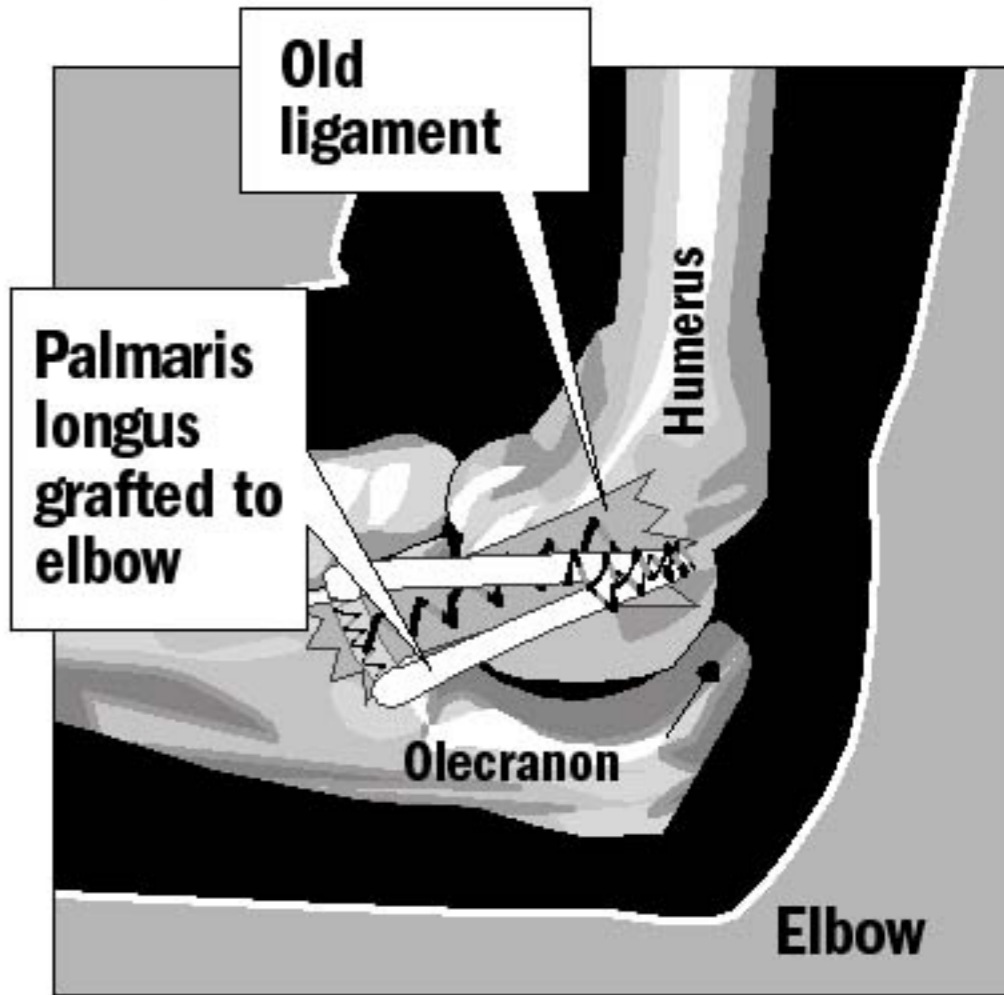
Dempster

Tommy John surgery

Surgery was scheduled to remove bone chips from the pitcher's elbow. Elbow ligaments loosen over time, causing an unnatural alignment of the bones that creates strain on muscles and rubbing in the joint. Healing from the strain creates a growth at the point of the elbow (olecranon); this growth is called a bone spur. A player's forceful arm extension can cause the humerus to rub against the olecranon — causing the spur to chip. Over time, repetition of the healing creates more chips and spurs. Elbow repair, called Tommy John surgery, can repair the ligament.



A useless or "extra" ligament of the wrist, the palmaris longus, is removed and grafted to the elbow ligament.



The new ligament is doubled over and grafted with sutures to opposite ends of the elbow, strengthening the joint.

Sources: Gannet News Service, Enquirer research