



Kristen G., Age 20
Lebanon, TN
Catcher, Arkansas Tech Softball Team

PROBLEM

“I started having pain when I threw. It was at the point I would hold the ball and say to myself, ‘I can’t throw it back to her; it hurts too bad.’ When I’d go to throw, it would almost feel like my arm was going to go with the ball. I’d be sore after playing a game, like things were swelling up in there. But the problem was I didn’t have pain doing ordinary things, just if I threw or lifted something heavy.”

SEEKING HELP

Dr. Petty was the third orthopaedic surgeon Ms. Gibbons consulted.

“He was the third doctor I saw. The first doctor told me it was tendonitis. I was upset because it took almost a year for somebody to tell me it wasn’t tendonitis. The second surgeon called in Dr. Petty to look at me because he said Dr. Petty is an expert. Dr. Petty specializes in shoulders and knows all about sports medicine and athletes. He’s done studies on baseball and athletes and throwing.”

DIAGNOSIS

“The first doctor told me it was tendonitis. It wasn’t. My ball and socket were loose and my rotator cuff was torn.”

OPTIONS

“I could continue therapy. I decided to have the surgery.”

OPERATION

“When Dr. Petty went in he found that the looseness was one of the problems, but I also had a 90% tear in the rotator cuff and a tear in the labrum. He fixed all that when he was in there. The surgery lasted two to three hours and it was all through the scope. He didn’t have to cut me. All I have is four little-bitty scars you can hardly see, less than half a centimeter. Nobody else could see them unless they got real close. I’m glad Dr. Petty did the surgery the new way.”

RESULTS

“I don’t have any pain. I’ve been throwing three months now. I just have to build up my muscles again. I haven’t had any problems. I can throw and hit; I’m able to do everything. I’m glad I went to Dr. Petty. He’s probably the best doctor I could have gone to.”

***Dr. Petty’s Comments:** I was grateful to be asked to help Kristen. She’s a hard worker and a good athlete. We used a new technique that I devised this year for fixing these partial rotator cuff tears that are so common in throwing athletes. We also had to stabilize her shoulder using advanced arthroscopic techniques to make sure the problem wouldn’t come right back.*