



# Augmented glenoid implants in anatomic total shoulder arthroplasty: review of available implants and current literature

Mohammad Ghoraishian, MD<sup>a</sup>, Joseph A. Abboud, MD<sup>a</sup>, Anthony A. Romeo, MD<sup>b</sup>, Gerald R. Williams, MD<sup>a</sup>, Surena Namdari, MD, MSc<sup>a,\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Rothman Institute—Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, PA, USA

<sup>b</sup>Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Rush University Medical Center, Chicago, IL, USA

Glenoid bone loss and retroversion increase the complexity of primary shoulder arthroplasty and affect the outcome. Although eccentric reaming, augmented glenoid implants, bone grafting, and reverse arthroplasty have been used to manage bone loss and retroversion, there is no consensus on treatment. Posteriorly augmented glenoid components can correct retroversion and avoid joint line medialization, which occurs with corrective reaming techniques. Full-wedged, half-wedged, and stepped polyethylene posteriorly augmented designs are currently available for use in the United States. The results of biomechanical and computer model studies support the use of augmented implants for the management of glenoid retroversion of greater than 15°. Currently, most clinical studies are retrospective case series. The short-term results of posteriorly augmented glenoid components are successful, with no clear evidence of the superiority of one design over another and unknown long-term survival rates.

**Level of evidence:** Level V; Narrative Review

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Total shoulder arthroplasty is a common procedure, and the number of primary and revision arthroplasties performed in the United States increases yearly.<sup>6</sup> The glenoid component is the cause of many late-term failures in anatomic total shoulder arthroplasty (aTSA).<sup>23</sup> Glenoid bone loss and retroversion increase the complexity of managing the glenoid in primary arthroplasty and have been associated with early glenoid loosening.<sup>35,39</sup> There are a variety of recom-

mended methods to manage glenoid bone loss in primary aTSA; however, there are no clear evidence-based guidelines.<sup>18</sup>

Ideally, establishing optimal joint biomechanics with aTSA includes restoration of the axial alignment. Failure to restore the glenoid version to normative values may lead to premature loosening.<sup>7,10,16,24,33</sup> Placing the prosthetic glenoid component in excessive retroversion may result in posterior humeral head displacement and eccentric loading of the glenoid component.<sup>3,5,21,27</sup> Eccentric reaming, bone grafting, augmented prosthetic glenoids, and reverse arthroplasty may be used to manage posterior glenoid bone loss in shoulder arthroplasty.<sup>22,28,30</sup> Presently, the best option is unknown. Augmented glenoid components are a more recent innovation in

\*Reprint requests: Surena Namdari, MD, MSc, Rothman Institute—Thomas Jefferson University, Shoulder & Elbow Surgery, 925 Chestnut St, Fifth Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107, USA.

E-mail address: [surena.namdari@rothmaninstitute.com](mailto:surena.namdari@rothmaninstitute.com) (S. Namdari).

shoulder arthroplasty that aim to restore joint alignment and soft-tissue tension.

In this article, we review the glenoid morphology in shoulder arthritis, describe different augmented glenoid component designs, discuss the available biomechanical data, and consolidate the available clinical studies.

## Management of posterior glenoid bone loss

### Eccentric reaming

Eccentric reaming is the most commonly used technique for managing glenoid retroversion and eccentric bone loss. It restores glenoid version by reaming the remaining native anterior glenoid fossa (“paleoglenoid”) to a single concentricity with the deformed glenoid fossa (“neoglenoid”). However, this technique may reduce the subchondral bone available for implant support, result in medialization of the joint line, and decrease the volume of the glenoid vault, especially in glenoids with significant retroversion. Medialization of the joint line can alter rotator cuff and posterior capsular tension, affect joint stability, and increase the risk of cortical perforation of the polyethylene (PE) implant peg or keel. In addition, reduction in subchondral bone support can increase the risk of implant loosening.<sup>9,17,26,31,40</sup>

### Glenoid bone grafting

Glenoid bone grafting is an alternative to eccentric reaming. It improves bone stock and version without joint line medialization but is technically demanding and has been associated with graft nonunion, resorption, or collapse, especially when combined with glenoid component cement fixation. Nicholson et al<sup>25</sup> showed full graft incorporation on the postoperative radiographs in their series of 28 osteoarthritic patients who underwent aTSA. After a mean of 4 years’ follow-up, they reported broken screws in 11% and displaced central peg markers in 11% of cases, but no cases went on to revision. Klika et al<sup>19</sup> reported a 25% rate of autograft resorption or non-incorporation after an 8-year follow-up of 25 aTSA cases. Other studies have reported similar percentages of periprosthetic radiolucencies and failure with glenoid bone grafting.<sup>12-14,19,30,39</sup>

### Reverse total shoulder arthroplasty

Reverse total shoulder arthroplasty has shown considerable promise in the management of glenoid bone loss.<sup>22</sup> Despite the successful results, many studies have reported a higher rate of complications and greater limitation in shoulder motion compared with aTSA.<sup>29,37</sup> In addition, some arthritic patients with posterior glenoid bone loss and retroversion are young active patients and may not be optimal candidates for reverse arthroplasty.

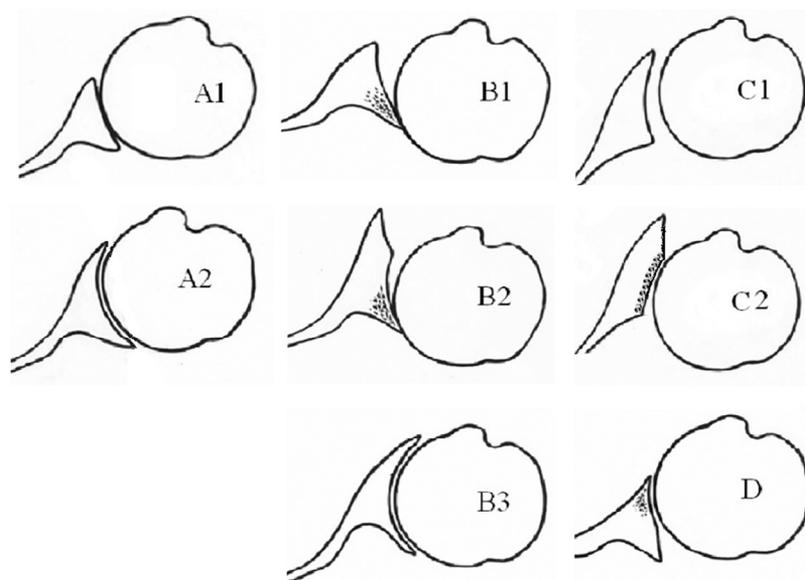
## Glenoid morphology classification

Walch et al<sup>38</sup> have proposed the most commonly used classification system for glenoid morphology in arthritis. It is based on the pattern of glenoid wear by reviewing axial computed tomography (CT) scans of arthritic joints. In the Walch classification, type A glenoids have a well-centered humeral head and either minor (type A1) or major (type A2) central erosion. Type B glenoids have posterior subluxation of the humeral head and either narrowing of the posterior joint space (type B1) or asymmetrical loading of the posterior glenoid resulting in biconcave morphology (type B2). Type C glenoids are hypoplastic with retroversion of more than 25°. <sup>38</sup> A modification of the Walch classification has been reported.<sup>2</sup> This modification addresses glenoid morphologies not described in the original classification and has higher interobserver and intraobserver reliability. In this modification, the type B3 glenoid is defined as monoconcave and posteriorly worn, with at least 15° of retroversion or at least 70% posterior humeral head subluxation, and the type D glenoid is one with any level of glenoid anteversion or with humeral head subluxation of less than 40% (anterior subluxation). The definitions of the type A2 and type C glenoids were also updated in the modified classification. In the type A2 glenoid, a line drawn from the anterior rim to posterior rim of the native glenoid transects the humeral head. The new definition of the type C glenoid is a dysplastic glenoid with at least 25° of retroversion “not caused by erosion.” The type C2 glenoid has also been described most recently and is a dysplastic glenoid with high pathologic retroversion, high pre-morbid version, and acquired posterior bone loss, giving it the appearance of a biconcave glenoid with posterior translation of the humeral head<sup>15</sup> (Fig. 1).

## Augmented glenoid designs

Glenoid augmentations can be monoblock (built into the implant) or modular (separate attachable wedge). Augmentations are made of PE or metal. Biomechanical and clinical studies have raised concerns regarding the use of metal augmentations. In a cadaveric model of type B2 glenoids, Kirane et al<sup>18</sup> have shown increased anterior compressive and posterior tensile strains by loading a titanium stepped implant compared with a PE stepped implant. This finding may be partly explained by the differences in the modulus of elasticity between titanium, PE, and bone. Cil et al<sup>4</sup> reported that the 10-year survival rate of posteriorly augmented metal-backed glenoid components was 31%. Although a short-term follow-up of an ingrowth metal augmentation has shown good results without any complications or revisions, long-term follow-ups are needed to better evaluate the safety and efficacy.<sup>32</sup> Currently, there are no metal augmentations for anatomic glenoid components available for clinical use in the United States; therefore, this review will focus on PE designs.

Augmented PE glenoid components have differing backside designs. There are currently 3 different designs



**Figure 1** Modified Walch classification. (Reprinted with permission from Bercik MJ et al.<sup>2</sup>)

commercially available for use in the United States. “Full-wedged” augmented components have a complete wedge built in the implant from anterior to posterior. Full-wedged implants are available in an all-PE design and a hybrid design with an ingrowth metal “cage.” These glenoid components have an 8°, 12°, or 16° full-wedged posterior augmentation (Equinox; Exactech, Gainesville, FL, USA). “Half-wedged” implants have a wedge that starts halfway on the posterior surface of the implant. The commercially available design has 15°, 25°, and 35° half wedges that correct 7°, 12°, and 17° of retroversion, respectively (Aequalis Perform+; Wright Medical Group, Memphis, TN, USA). “Stepped” implants have a built-in stepped surface that contacts the prepared bone perpendicular to the vector of joint loading. In the Global StepTech anchor peg glenoid component (DePuy Synthes, Warsaw, IN, USA), there are 3 step sizes, +3 mm, +5 mm, and +7 mm, that correspond to about 10°, 15°, and 20° of retroversion correction, respectively.

## Simulation or finite element analysis studies

### Augmentation versus eccentric reaming

On the basis of these studies, augmented components may not be necessary when retroversion is less than 15°, with the surgeon instead using the traditional technique of eccentric reaming to make corrections of less than 10°. In a finite element analysis, Hermida et al<sup>11</sup> showed that stresses in the implant, cement, and glenoid bone are lower when a full-wedged component is used instead of eccentric reaming for a 15° or 17° retroverted, monoconcave (type B3) glenoid. Similarly, Sabesan et al<sup>31</sup> performed a surgical simulation study of 29 different (type B2 and C) glenoids with acquired bone loss and retroversion (mean retroversion, 20.9°).

This study showed less medialization and better correction of the joint center of rotation with a stepped augmented component than with eccentric reaming. The results supported using stepped augmented implants for retroversion of more than 16°.<sup>31</sup>

### Comparison of different augmented designs

Knowles et al<sup>20</sup> evaluated full-wedged, half-wedged, and stepped augmented implants for the management of type B2 glenoids by virtual implantation. The models were created by 3-dimensional CT scans of 16 patients. The half-wedged implant removed less bone, and the remaining supporting bone had better density. The authors proposed that the appropriate design to minimize the amount of bone removal may be different based on preoperative glenoid morphology. They suggested using 3-dimensional CT scans to determine the appropriate implant. However, in their study, 50% of the glenoids had a neo-version angle of 30° or more. To correct to 0° of version (also clinically debatable), +7-mm stepped prosthetic components (5 of 16 glenoids) were used. Because of the amount of bone removal required during preparation, +7-mm stepped glenoids are less frequently used. Another study on full-wedged and stepped augmented implants showed full-wedged implants to be more bone preserving than stepped components in 10 arthritic type B2 glenoids with mean retroversion of  $21^\circ \pm 6^\circ$ .<sup>17</sup> Moreover, Allred et al<sup>1</sup> compared full-wedged implants, stepped implants, and eccentric reaming in a finite element analysis of 3 different models of type B2 glenoids (8°, 13°, and 17° of retroversion). They reported a lower amount of bone removal, lower amount of bone under significant stress, and higher percentage of cortical support in full-wedged components compared with stepped implants and eccentric reaming. The differences between the

full-wedged and stepped implants were not statistically significant.<sup>1</sup> On the basis of the available data, it appears that half-wedged and full-wedged implants remove less bone compared with stepped components when used for type B2 glenoids. Future studies should consider normalizing the results with the optimal correction angle and in different patterns of bone loss to give a better idea of the volume of bone removed in each design and for each bone loss pattern. In addition, it remains unclear whether these relatively small differences impact the technical challenges at the time of surgery, the clinical outcomes, and the overall longevity of the implants.

## Biomechanical studies

### Augmentation versus eccentric reaming

Some biomechanical studies of glenoids with up to 15° of retroversion have reported advantages to eccentric reaming over the use of augmented implants. These studies recommended using eccentric reaming for the correction of retroversion as long as reaming does not violate the subchondral bone. Wang et al<sup>41</sup> compared the use of a full-wedged component with eccentric reaming. Defects were created that resulted in 12° of retroversion in 12 composite scapular models. Implant edge displacement and load were measured. If the extent of glenoid component subsidence into the bone resulted in loosening or destruction of the markers used for edge displacement measurement, this was defined as a failure. The authors showed that almost all of the premature implant failures had been managed by wedged components. More implants failed from the wedged augmentation, and even the implants that survived showed more edge displacement and loosening than the models managed by eccentric reaming. Wang et al raised the concern that the angled backside geometry of the wedged implant may convert axial load to shear stress at the implant-bone interface.

A biomechanical study by Sowa et al<sup>34</sup> assessed glenoid component stability in a type B2 model with 15° of glenoid retroversion. They analyzed 3 different methods of treatment: no retroversion correction with standard implant (Aequalis Perform, size M40), eccentric reaming with standard implant, and half-wedged implant with 15° of posterior augmentation (Aequalis Perform+, size L40). Five artificial scapulae in each group were loaded with physiological shoulder forces. Significantly more micromotion was shown in the first group (standard component implanted in retroversion) at 2000 cycles. Moreover, subluxation of the prosthetic head was noted only in this group. At 10,000 cycles, higher micromotion was noted in the half-wedged implant group compared with the eccentric reaming group ( $P < .0001$ ). The authors recommended glenoid augmentation as a viable option in the management of cases with at least 15° of glenoid retroversion and eccentric wear.

## Comparison of different augmented designs

A formal biomechanical comparison of the 3 commercially available augmented glenoid designs has not been performed. Iannotti et al<sup>16</sup> performed a biomechanical study in which glenoid components were implanted on custom-made blocks. They compared a stepped implant with 4 other glenoid designs: 3 full-wedged implants with different backside configurations (flat, symmetrical spherical, and asymmetrical spherical) and a standard anchor peg implant. They showed the least posterior component liftoff when the stepped implant was used and suggested that the stepped implant would be more likely to maintain long-term fixation in vivo compared with the other tested augmentations. Accordingly, Kirane et al<sup>18</sup> reported similar periglenoid strains when comparing a stepped implant used in the setting of a 20° retroverted type B2 glenoid (10 specimens) and a standard component used in the setting of a normal glenoid (5 specimens).

## Clinical data

Most clinical studies on augmented implants are case series, typically reported by the designers or consultants associated with the specific implant. Limited studies to date have compared the results of posteriorly augmented glenoid components with other methods of managing glenoid retroversion and bone loss, such as eccentric reaming, bone grafting, and reverse total shoulder arthroplasty. Similarly, no study to date has compared the results of the different commercially available augmented designs. With studies with low levels of evidence, small numbers of patients, and short-term follow-up periods, the theoretically superior results of these advanced designs including stepped implants and wedged implants in comparison with traditional methods of eccentric reaming have not been shown.

### Full-wedged design

Wright et al<sup>42</sup> evaluated 24 patients with osteoarthritis and posterior glenoid wear managed with a full-wedged augmented glenoid (Equinox) with a minimum of 2 years' follow-up. The patients in the augmented group were matched with a control group of patients treated with nonaugmented glenoids for osteoarthritis without posterior glenoid wear. All patients showed significant improvements in pain and function after treatment. There were no statistical differences between the augmented and nonaugmented groups regarding improvement or postoperative clinical outcomes. A radiolucent line was present in 60% of the augmented group compared with 33.3% of nonaugmented patients. One glenoid met the radiographic criteria for loosening in the augmented group. There were no posterior subluxations. No complications or revisions were reported. The authors concluded that augmentation can be considered for active patients

with a healthy and intact rotator cuff and glenoid retroversion of 25° or less.

### Stepped implant design

Three studies have reported clinical results of stepped implant designs for the management of retroversion and posterior glenoid bone loss. Stephens et al<sup>36</sup> reported on 21 patients treated with a stepped implant (Global StepTech) for osteoarthritis with glenoid retroversion (average, 20.8°) and posterior bone loss (type B2 in 19 and type C in 2) at a minimum of

2 years' follow-up (mean, 35 months). They found significant improvement in range of motion, visual analog scale pain scores, and functional scores. Significant improvements were noted for glenoid retroversion (11.8°), humeral scapular alignment, and humeral glenoid alignment. Radiolucencies surrounding the glenoid were found in 5 patients (24%), with grade 1 in 4 patients and grade 2 in 1. They were all incomplete and had not progressed. Evidence of bone ingrowth into the flanges of the central peg was seen in 95.2% of implants. No loosening, complications, or revisions were reported. Favorito et al<sup>8</sup> performed a retrospective review of 22 shoulders

**Table I** Simulation or finite element analysis studies

Author, year	Type of glenoid	Type of implant	Result	P value
Knowles et al, <sup>20</sup> 2015	Type B2: 16 cases	Full wedged	Half-wedged implant removed less bone	<.001
		Half wedged	Higher remaining bone density in half-wedged implant compared with stepped	.048
		Stepped		
Kersten et al, <sup>17</sup> 2015	Type B2: 10 cases Mean version: 21° ± 6°	Full wedged	Least bone removed by full-wedged implant	<.001
		Stepped	More back surface supported by cortical bone in full-wedged implant	.01
		Standard		
Sabesan et al, <sup>31</sup> 2014	Types B and C: 29 cases Mean version: 21° ± 10°	Stepped	Less medialization in stepped implant	<.001
Hermida et al, <sup>11</sup> 2014	Type B2: 2 models Version: 15° or 17°	Standard		
		Full wedged	Lower stress in full-wedged implant cement mantle compared with eccentric reaming	—
		Standard with eccentric reaming	Volume of cement likely to survive 10 million cycles highest in full-wedged implant	—
Allred et al, <sup>1</sup> 2016	Type B2: 3 models Version: 8°, 13°, or 17°	Standard in retroversion		
		Full wedged	Least cortical bone removed in full-wedged implant and most in standard implant	.055
		Stepped	Highest percentage of cortical bone support in full-wedged implant and lowest in standard implant	.009
		Standard (eccentric reaming)	Highest volume of bone under significant strain in implant with eccentric reaming and lowest in full-wedged implant	<.001

**Table II** Biomechanical studies

Author, year	Type of glenoid	Type of implant	Result	P value
Kirane et al, <sup>18</sup> 2012	Type B2: 10 type B2 glenoids with 20° defect and 5 normal glenoids	Stepped (modular): polyethylene and titanium	Strains were same in stepped implant in B2 glenoid compared with standard implant in normal glenoid	—
Iannotti et al, <sup>16</sup> 2013	Custom-made blocks	Standard		
		Stepped	Lower liftoff in stepped	<.05
		Full wedged with 3 different backside shapes		
Wang et al, <sup>41</sup> 2015	Type B2: 12 composite scapulae with 12° defects	Standard		
		Full wedged	Lower implant edge displacement by superior and inferior edge loading in eccentric reaming	.025; .009
Sowa et al, <sup>34</sup> 2018	Type B2: 15 artificial bones with 15° of retroversion	Standard (eccentric reaming)	Higher survival in eccentric reaming	
		Half wedged (15°, keel)	Most micromotion at 2000 cycles and subluxation in retroverted group	<.0001
		Standard with eccentric reaming and keel	Higher micromotion at 10,000 cycles in half-wedged implant compared with eccentric reaming	<.0001
		Standard in retroversion		

**Table III** Clinical studies

Author, year	Type of glenoid	Implant	Mean age, yr	Follow-up, mo	Cases or controls	Complications	Revisions	Radiographic lucency	Radiographic loosening	Component full seating (grade A)	Other
Wright et al, <sup>42</sup> 2015	Case: posterior wear Control: without wear	Full wedged (Equinoxe) with 8° or 16° of correction Standard	66	30 (22-38)	24 cases 24 controls	None	None	Cases: 60%; score, 1.1 Controls: 33%; score, 0.43	1 patient in case group	—	No difference in outcome between cases and controls
Stephens et al, <sup>36</sup> 2017	Type B2: 19 Type C: 2	Stepped (StepTech) Size 3+ mm (5°): 7 Size 5+ mm (10°): 14	66	35 (24-41)	21	None	None	Grade 1: 4 Grade 2: 1	None	90%	Central peg: bone ingrowth in 95% and osteolysis in 1 case
Favorito et al, <sup>8</sup> 2016	Type B2: 20 Type C: 2 Version: 23.5° (16°-37°)	Stepped (StepTech)	62	36 (26-46)	22 (2 did not have follow-up)	2: anterior dislocation (revised with larger head); posterior dislocation (reverse TSA)	2	Grade 1: 8 Grade 2: 1 Score: 0.53	None	100%	Central peg: bone ingrowth in 63% and osteolysis in 1 case
Youderian et al, <sup>43</sup> 2012	Posterior deficiency	Stepped (StepTech)	—	Up to 15 mo (minimum of 6 mo in 18)	24	2: subscapularis failure, glenoid component failure (revised)	1	Grade 0 or 1: 58% Grade 2: 29% Grade 3: 13%	1	96%	—

TSA, total shoulder arthroplasty.

with posterior glenoid bone loss and retroversion of greater than 15° (mean, 23.5°; type B2 in 20 and type C in 2). The shoulders were treated with a stepped implant (Global StepTech Anchor Peg Glenoid). The authors reported significant improvements in visual analog scale pain scores, range of motion, and functional scores at a minimum of 2 years' follow-up (mean, 36 months). Central peg flange osseous integration was seen in 12 shoulders (63%), and only 1 showed osteolysis. Youderian et al<sup>43</sup> reported on the early results of 24 patients who underwent augmentation with a stepped component (Global StepTech Anchor Peg Glenoid) at a minimum of 6 months' follow-up. Significant improvement in clinical function and pain levels was noted in 94% of cases. There was 1 early failure of the glenoid component in a patient with severe glenoid dysplasia that required revision surgery.

## Conclusion

The results of current biomechanical and clinical studies suggest that posteriorly augmented glenoid components may be valuable for specific indications (15°-25° of retroversion and significant posterior subluxation, as well as eccentric wear), improving the surgeon's ability to return axial alignment and subluxation close to normative values without compromising the native bone, as is seen with eccentric reaming techniques. At this time there is no evidence on the superiority of one commercially available design over another. Some authors have proposed individualizing the type of component based on the glenoid morphology, but evidence showing that these recommendations improve outcomes is lacking. The impact of the size of the remaining neoglenoid or deformities now classified as type B3 glenoids on the results of augmented glenoids has not been reported (Tables I-III).

On the basis of the available reports analyzing the biomechanics and outcomes of posteriorly augmented glenoid components, the role of these implants is assuming a greater presence in the armamentarium of surgeons who treat complex deformities of the arthritic glenoid. Although data on long-term radiographic and clinical outcomes are currently lacking, future multicenter clinical investigations to compare the various types of augmented implants with other techniques of glenoid bone loss management will help to provide appropriate-use clinical guidelines for this challenging and unfortunately common problem related to glenohumeral joint arthritis.

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