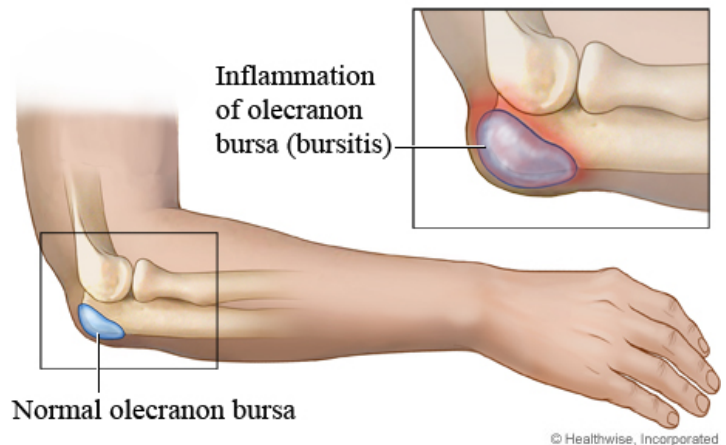


## Olecranon Bursitis

**Olecranon bursitis** is a swelling of the sac behind the elbow, and there are numerous possible causes. **Trauma** can cause bleeding behind the elbow. **Gout** can also cause acute inflammation and even infection. Infection is possible, which usually indicates an emergent surgical problem. As long as there is no infection, we can treat this conservatively with aspiration of the material in the bursa and placement of steroids to reduce the swelling. A heelbo elbow cushioning pad is typically one to protect from pressure on the back of the elbow. The less pressure over the elbow, the better. Occasionally if there is some surrounding cellulitis or other infection we will place the patient on antibiotics.



---

## Surgical Treatment

Depending on the response to conservative treatment there is also a surgical option. On occasion this becomes a chronic problem which will require removal of the bursa in a procedure known as a **bursectomy**. There can also be posterior spurs, otherwise known as **osteophytes**, or uneven tearing of the triceps tendon. Typically if surgery is scheduled it is done as an outpatient with a regional anesthesia called a "block". The elbow is kept fully immobilized in a soft dressing with a posterior plaster splint to prevent motion and allow the wound to heal. The sutures are usually removed at 2 weeks and the same heelbo elbow pad is worn for 2 more weeks full time. Remember, the less pressure over the elbow, the better!