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2-29-2016

A rigid body model for the assessment of glenohumeral joint mechanics: Influence of osseous defects on range of motion and dislocation

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Citation of this paper:

Welsh, Mark F.; Willing, Ryan T.; Giles, Joshua W.; Athwal, George S.; and Johnson, James A., "A rigid body model for the assessment of glenohumeral joint mechanics: Influence of osseous defects on range of motion and dislocation" (2016). *Bone and Joint Institute*. 59.
<https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/boneandjointpub/59>

1 **ABSTRACT**

2

3 The purpose of this study was to employ subject-specific computer models to evaluate the interaction of
4 glenohumeral range-of-motion and Hill-Sachs humeral head bone defect size on engagement and shoulder
5 dislocation. We hypothesized that the rate of engagement would increase as defect size increased, and that
6 greater shoulder ROM would engage smaller defects. Three dimensional computer models of twelve
7 shoulders were created. For each shoulder, additional models were created with simulated Hill-Sachs
8 defects of varying severities (XS=15%, S=22.5%, M=30%, L=37.5%, XL=45% and XXL=52.5% of the
9 humeral head diameter, respectively). Rotational motion simulations without translation were conducted.
10 The simulations ended if the defect engaged the anterior glenoid rim with resultant dislocation. The results
11 showed that the rate of engagement was significantly different between defect sizes ($0.001 < p < 0.032$).
12 Defect engagement occurred for all specimens when defects size XL and XXL were simulated. Size M or L
13 defects engaged in some (but not all) specimens. Defect engagement occurred at mean horizontal extension
14 angles of $-23.6 \pm 9.3^\circ$, $-17.9 \pm 10.8^\circ$, $-4.5 \pm 9.0^\circ$, and $+6.4 \pm 8.8^\circ$ for M, L, XL, and XXL defect sizes,
15 respectively. Differences in engagement angle between defect sizes were significant for all comparisons
16 ($p < 0.001$). The model showed that XS and S size defects do not engage when only rotational motions are
17 considered. Since engagement of XS and S size Hill-Sachs defects is believed to occur clinically, we
18 suspect that some amount of joint translation may be occurring, causing these defects to engage. Therefore,
19 further studies on clinical pre-operative joint laxity and ROM may enable the prediction of engagement.

20

21 **KEYWORDS:** Hill-Sachs; instability; shoulder; dislocation, multibody models

22

1 **A Rigid Body Model for the Assessment of Glenohumeral Joint Mechanics: Influence of**
2 **Osseous Defects on Range of Motion and Dislocation**

3

4 **INTRODUCTION**

5 Humeral head defects are associated with glenohumeral joint dislocation and recurrent instability.
6 Hill and Sachs (Hill and Sachs 1940) were the first to report these defects as being associated
7 with shoulder instability. These defects, now referred to as Hill-Sachs defects (HSD), occur when
8 the humerus dislocates anteriorly, causing an impression fracture on the posterosuperior humeral
9 head as it impacts against the denser bone of the anterior glenoid rim. This defect has been
10 reported in 65-80% of initial dislocations, and close to 100% of cases with recurrent dislocation
11 (Calandra et al. 1989, Degen et al. 2013, Kaar et al. 2010, Taylor and Arciero 1997).

12 Several methods have been described for treating shoulder instability with associated HSDs
13 including benign neglect, remplissage, allograft reconstruction, osteochondral transfer,
14 humeroplasty, partial resurfacing arthroplasty, humeral osteotomy and hemiarthroplasty (Boileau
15 et al. 2007, Boileau et al. 2006, Burkhart and Danaceau 2000, Burkhart and De Beer 2000, Chen
16 et al. 2005, Giles et al. 2011, Kropf and Sekiya 2007, Re et al. 2006). These operative procedures
17 vary in the techniques used to address the defect to eliminate defect-glenoid interaction. For
18 example, the remplissage fills the defect with soft tissue, while allograft reconstruction,
19 osteochondral transfer and humeroplasty use bone. Hemiarthroplasty and partial resurfacing
20 reconstructions use metallic implants to fill the defect. In the case of HSDs, the treatment method
21 may vary based on the properties of the defect and patient factors. Selecting the most appropriate
22 technique is not always readily apparent, as the literature remains incomplete in examining the
23 defect state and its interaction with the glenoid. There is also little consensus on the size of defect
24 that will cause recurrent instability, as well as the joint position or type of movement that may

25 cause defect engagement. Clinically, engagement occurs when the leading edge of the humeral
26 articular defect moves anterior to the anterior glenoid rim, causing medialization of the humeral
27 head on the glenoid, and resultant joint dislocation (Miniaci A, 2004). A study by Sekiya et al.
28 (2009) suggests that defects as small as 12.5% of humeral head diameter may have
29 biomechanical implications on glenohumeral stability, while a more recent study by Sekiya et al.
30 (2012) argues that isolated defects that are less than 25.0% of humeral head width may not cause
31 recurrent engagement. Studies by Kaar et al. (2010) and Walia et al. (2013) examined the effect
32 of HSD sizes in different positions of abduction and external rotation, quantifying joint stability
33 by the anterior translational distance before dislocation. These respective in-vitro and in-silico
34 studies showed an inverse relationship between defect size and humeral translational distance
35 before the onset of instability; however, they chose not to investigate the effects of isolated
36 rotational movements, such as horizontal extension, on engagement and instability. This motion
37 is clinically relevant, as it is more indicative of the manner that patients typically report recurrent
38 dislocations(Taylor and Arciero, 1997), opposed to an incident occurring with an anteriorly
39 directed force. Furthermore, surgeons may intra-operatively elect to place the humeral head into
40 abduction and external rotation before horizontally extending the humerus to inspect defect
41 engagement (Burkhart and De Beer, 2000). The literature remains uninformed on the influence of
42 isolated rotation, thus supporting the need for further information regarding the effects of
43 glenohumeral ROM on defect engagement and instability.

44 The purpose of this study was to employ 3D computer models to quantify the effects of
45 humeral extension range of motion on HSD engagement. The influence of HSD size on the rate
46 of engagement among twelve cadaveric shoulders and the glenohumeral joint angle at
47 engagement was evaluated to determine a relationship between these variables. A computer
48 model was selected to examine a broad range of conditions that could be calculated with a high

49 level of repeatability, conforming to similar practice by Walia et al. (2013). We hypothesized that
50 the rate of engagement would increase as HSD size increased, and additionally, simulations with
51 greater degrees of shoulder range of motion (horizontal extension) would engage smaller defects.

52

53 **METHODS**

54 *Specimen Modelling & Simulation Construction*

55 Twelve unpaired male cadaveric shoulders (mean age: 65 years; age range: 21-77) were
56 evaluated. Specimens were screened for exclusion criteria including osteoarthritis, trauma or
57 previous surgery prior to model creation. CT scans with a slice thickness of 0.625mm and
58 average pixel size of 0.592mm were used to create 3D models of the scapula and humerus via
59 threshold-based segmentation ($HU > 226$) using Mimics 15.0 software (Materialise, Ann Arbor,
60 MI). These models were wrapped, smoothed, and decimated to minimize staircase artifacts. The
61 models were imported into the SolidWorks Motion Study software package (Dassault Systèmes
62 SolidWorks Corp, Waltham, MA) and were converted into solid CAD geometries for analysis.
63 An assembly was created with the humerus and scapula originally oriented in the neutral position
64 (0° axial rotation, 0° abduction).

65 The model was designed to evaluate the effect of a HSD on glenohumeral movement in the
66 position of abduction and external rotation, which is clinically associated with HSD engagement
67 and called the ‘apprehension position’ due to a patient’s sense of joint instability. Utilizing a
68 standard 2:1 ratio of glenohumeral to scapulothoracic joint motion as described by McQuade et
69 al. (McQuade and Smidt 1998), the scapula model was placed in the 30° abduction, the humerus
70 model was placed in 60° of glenohumeral abduction in the scapular plane (scaption) and 60°
71 external rotation, clinically referred to as the position of apprehension for shoulder instability
72 (Fig. 1A). In this position, the orientation of the HSD was determined as defined by Sekiya et al.

73 (2009) and Yamamoto et al. (2007). To create the defect, a line was drawn on the humeral head
74 parallel to the anterior glenoid rim (Fig. 1B), which represented the orientation of a defect on the
75 humeral head caused by dislocation with the joint in the position of apprehension (Fig. 1A). The
76 diameter of the humeral head perpendicular to this line was measured. HSDs of varying size were
77 then created as a percentage of this diameter. The test conditions included an intact humeral head
78 and HSD sizes of 15.0%, 22.5%, 30.0%, 37.5%, 45.0%, and 52.5% of the humeral head diameter.
79 These defect sizes are herein referred to as extra-small (XS), small (S), medium (M), large (L),
80 extra-large (XL), and extra-extra-large (XXL), respectively. The humeral head posterior and
81 superior to the Hill-Sachs orientation line was removed for all defect sizes with material removed
82 down to the articular margin thus creating a wedge shaped defect with a right angle at its base
83 (Fig. 1C).

84 A series of points on the glenoid rim of the scapula model were used to create a plane of best
85 fit oriented parallel to the glenoid face. A glenoid coordinate system was also created, with the
86 origin within this best-fit plane, and located at the intersection of the axes measuring maximum
87 glenoid superior/inferior length and anterior/posterior width (Fig. 2). Humeral head medial/lateral
88 translation was measured as the distance from the center of the humeral head to the glenoid plane,
89 measured along the lateral direction of the glenoid coordinate system. This distance was
90 compared between intact and defect humeral head conditions. The approximate centre of the
91 humeral head was calculated using a sphere-fit algorithm. As the purpose of the study was to
92 determine the occurrence of humeral head engagement on the glenoid due to isolated humeral
93 rotation, the humerus was restricted from translating in the anterior/posterior and superior/inferior
94 directions once it was initially centered with respect to the glenoid. However, translations were
95 permitted in the medial/lateral direction, as these are required to permit the HSDs to engage the
96 glenoid rim.

97

98 ***Simulation Protocol***

99 The scapula and humerus bone models were defined to be non-deformable rigid bodies. Motions
100 were calculated using the default Gear Stiff (GSTIFF) integrator. Contact was modelled between
101 the bones using an impact (penalty regularisation method) algorithm, and a high contact stiffness
102 (100,000 N/mm) was chosen to eliminate penetration between the bone surfaces. As a compliant
103 structure, cartilage was omitted in this rigid body model. The starting position of the shoulder for
104 all simulations was 90° of abduction (Fig. 3A) – which was comprised of 60° of glenohumeral
105 abduction and 30° of scapular elevation (i.e. a 2:1 scapulothoracic contribution) – in the sagittal
106 plane with the humerus externally rotated by 60° (Fig. 3B). These rotations follow a YXY
107 concept from the ISB recommendations by Wu et al. (2005), while mechanically defining the
108 rotations in SolidWorks Motion Study software. Abduction beginning in the sagittal plane was
109 chosen to account for testing scenarios where the largest Hill-Sachs defects could potentially
110 engage before the humerus extended to the commonly described clinical position of apprehension
111 in the scapular plane. As such, the motion simulation started with the humerus parallel to the
112 ground, anterior to the scapular plane, and externally rotated and progressed by horizontally
113 extending the humerus (i.e. rotating it posteriorly about an axis perpendicular to the transverse
114 plane) into the position of apprehension (abducted and externally rotated posterior to the scapular
115 plane) while maintaining the level of abduction and external rotation (Fig. 3C). To keep the joint
116 articulated (i.e. maintain contact between the two bone's surfaces), a compressive force of 50N
117 was applied to the centre of the humeral head, directed medially and maintained perpendicular to
118 the glenoid face. This load was selected based on conditions employed in previous studies (Kaar
119 et al. 2010, Walia et al. 2013) and pilot testing that showed no change in results for loads beyond

120 50N. The medial/lateral displacement of the centre of the humeral head and the angle of
121 extension were recorded.

122

123 *Outcome Variables & Statistical Analyses*

124 The primary outcome variables were the rate of humeral head engagement on the anterior glenoid
125 rim and the joint angle at which engagement occurred, termed the “engagement angle”. The
126 medial/lateral movement of the centre of the humeral head was recorded with respect to the angle
127 of horizontal extension (Fig. 4), for both the intact humerus and all defect sizes. The
128 medial/lateral positions of the humerus during simulations in the defect state, compared to the
129 corresponding medial/lateral positions of the intact joint, were plotted with respect to joint angle.
130 While engagement is conceptually simple, objective quantification proved to be difficult. A
131 surgeon (G.S.A) observed simulated shoulder motion and indicated the moment at which defect
132 engagement occurred (Fig. 5), and it was determined that this correlated to a medial displacement
133 of the humeral head of 2mm in comparison to the normalized data plots for medial/lateral
134 translation of the intact humeral head at that exact time. Thus, a medial translation of the humeral
135 head ≥ 2 mm was defined as the criterion for indicating engagement.

136 The occurrence of engagement (engagement or no engagement) was recorded at all defect
137 sizes. A one-tailed McNemar test was performed for this outcome using SPSS software (SPSS
138 Inc., Chicago, IL, USA) to assess marginal homogeneity. The engagement angle was quantified
139 as the difference in joint angle between the scapular plane and the position when the humeral
140 head engaged and dislocated. This outcome allowed for comparison between defect size and
141 angle of engagement. Statistical analysis for this outcome consisted of a one-way repeated-
142 measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) and pair-wise comparisons with a Bonferroni
143 correction. All statistical measures defined significance as $p < 0.05$.

144

145 **RESULTS**146 *Glenohumeral Instability*

147 The occurrence of HSD engagement was significantly different ($0.001 < p < 0.032$) between defect
148 sizes (Fig. 6). All size XL and XXL HSDs engaged, 7 (58%) of the size L defects engaged, 2
149 (17%) of the size M defects engaged, and defect sizes XS and S did not engage the anterior
150 glenoid rim. This resulted in a significant difference in instability between M vs. L defects
151 ($p=0.032$), M vs. XL defects ($p=0.001$), and L vs. XL defects ($p=0.032$).

152

153 *Joint Angle at Engagement*

154 As HSD size increased, the magnitude of humeral extension range of motion to engagement
155 (engagement angle) decreased, resulting in greater shoulder instability. The HSDs of size M, L,
156 XL and XXL caused engagement at mean joint angles of $-23.6 \pm 9.3^\circ$, $-17.9 \pm 10.8^\circ$, $-4.5 \pm 9.0^\circ$, and
157 $+6.4 \pm 8.8^\circ$, respectively (Fig. 7). These values were measured in relation to the scapular plane,
158 where positive values represent engagement and dislocation anterior to the scapular plane and
159 negative values are posterior to the plane. During simulated humeral extension, there were
160 significant differences in the engagement angles between defect states ($p < 0.001$). The size XXL
161 HSDs engaged at a significantly lower engagement angle than size XL defects ($10.9 \pm 1.2^\circ$,
162 $p < 0.001$) and size L defects ($23.8 \pm 3.6^\circ$, $p < 0.001$). The size XL defects engaged earlier than the
163 size L defects ($12.9 \pm 2.7^\circ$, $p < 0.001$), and the size L defects engaged before the size M defects.

164 **DISCUSSION**

165 The influence of various HSD sizes on engagement and dislocation with shoulder motion in
166 extension and rotation is not completely understood. The effect of anterior translation of the
167 humerus on the glenoid has been examined (Kaar et al. 2010, Sekiya et al. 2009, Walia et al.
168 2013), however, there is no data that quantifies the independent effect of humeral extension on
169 producing engagement in the defect state. This is important as it relates to the surgeons ability to
170 examine for engagement intra-operatively with arthroscopy (Burkhart and De Beer, 2000). Intra-
171 operatively while viewing through a posterior arthroscopic portal, instability can be revealed by
172 translating the humeral head forward until dislocation or by placing the humeral head into
173 abduction and external rotation and allowing the defect to rotate or horizontally extend to
174 engagement. The translational method of determining engagement of a lesion may be less
175 clinically relevant, as patients typically do not describe a recurrent dislocation occurring with an
176 anteriorly directed force. Rather, most patients with recurrent instability describe apprehension
177 or the occurrence of instability with the arm in abduction and external rotation (Taylor and
178 Arciero, 1997). Therefore, our aim was to examine the role of range of motion, specifically
179 humeral horizontal extension on engagement, independent from glenohumeral translation.

180 Our results indicated that glenohumeral joint translation is not necessarily required to produce
181 instability when HSDs are present. With HSDs of at least 30% of the width of the humeral head
182 (medium size defects), engagement and resultant dislocation occurred in 33 of 48 (69%) of the
183 cases (12 specimens at 4 defect levels each). The presence of HSDs on the humeral head
184 substantially reduces the arc length of the articular surface, resulting in engagement and
185 dislocation. In the case of an intact humerus, the articular contact area is continuous throughout
186 motion, whereas in the defect state the joint extends to an angle at which the leading edge of the
187 defect moves anterior to the anterior glenoid rim. At this point the humeral head is no longer able

188 to support the compressive articular load causing the humerus to medialize and engage on the
189 glenoid rim (Miniaci A, 2004). This instability is important as it reveals that HSDs size M or
190 larger are able to engage and result in dislocation even when the humeral head remains centered
191 in the joint as it rotates. Therefore, patients with larger defects may be susceptible to engagement
192 and dislocation while conducting simple joint rotations, without excessive forces or translations.

193 In the simulations of joint motion with HSDs of size XS and S (15% and 22.5% of the
194 humeral head diameter), no joint dislocations were noted, and a dislocation rate of 16.7% was
195 found for size M defects. This dislocation occurrence rate differed significantly from the large
196 and extra-large defect states, as seen in Fig. 8. These results speak to the nature of translation and
197 rotation in the interaction of a HSD on the glenoid rim. Anecdotic clinical experiences have
198 demonstrated engagement with some extra-small and small lesions. This emphasizes that humeral
199 translation or joint laxity may have some role to play in glenohumeral dislocation with smaller
200 HSDs. This improves our understanding of the interaction between HSDs and the glenoid rim
201 during in-vivo motion.

202 The glenohumeral joint angle at engagement produced further insight into the influence of
203 HSD size on shoulder stability. An increase in HSD size had a direct effect on reducing the angle
204 of extension at which engagement occurred. The average dislocation angle reduced from
205 $23.6 \pm 9.3^\circ$ posterior to the scapular plane to $6.4 \pm 8.8^\circ$ anterior to the scapular plane as HSD size
206 increased from M to XXL. The difference between engagement angles further emphasizes the
207 significance of reducing the articular arc length of the humeral head. It is of particular interest to
208 note that specimens with an extra-extra-large HSD engaged, on average, before even reaching the
209 clinically apprehensive position in the scapular plane. As the humerus extended horizontally, the
210 defect engaged at a mean angle of $6.4 \pm 8.8^\circ$ anterior to the scapular plane. This finding is
211 important as it reveals the high level of joint instability associated with very large HSDs. Thus,

212 the results demonstrate that the shoulder joint is not required to approach end-range motion in
213 order to cause instability. Furthermore, as these simulations were based on pure humeral rotation,
214 it is possible that engagement would occur in even less extension if humeral translation and joint
215 laxity was incorporated. This information also provides insight into whether a HSD will engage
216 based on each patient's specific range of motion envelope. For example, some patients with
217 normally less horizontal extension range of motion may not engage a larger HSD. This lack of
218 engagement would occur because the patient's normal range of motion is less than the defect
219 size-specific engagement angle. Conversely, some patients with greater than average horizontal
220 extension motion may engage a smaller HSD. Additionally, not all specimens with a particular
221 sized HSD engaged. For example, only 2 of 12 medium sized HSDs engaged (Fig. 8). This
222 indicates that subtle differences in bony anatomy also have a role to play in instability. These
223 differences may be accounted for through examining the effect of varying orientations of HSDs
224 on the humeral articular surface, which is also likely to influence the interaction between the
225 HSD and glenoid rim. In the case of this study, however, defect orientation was selected based on
226 techniques used by Sekiya et al. (2009) and Yamamoto et al. (2007).

227 Some limitations were present in this in-silico biomechanical study. The models only included
228 bony geometry of the joint with exclusion of cartilage and soft tissues. We elected not to model
229 the anterior glenoid labrum, because it is typically detached and medialized after a shoulder
230 dislocation. The study, however, is still effective in defining the influence of defect geometry on
231 joint dislocation, which stands as the basis for when instability will occur. While HSDs have
232 been shown to be associated with glenoid bone defects (Burkhart and Danaceau 2000, Burkhart
233 and De Beer 2000, Sekiya et al. 2009, Yamamoto et al. 2007), we chose to focus solely on HSDs
234 in order to examine their specific influence on joint stability. Defect depth was also modelled for
235 a worst-case scenario, where the depth of the humeral defect extended to the humeral head/neck

236 junction. While these worst-case defects occur clinically, patients may also present with
237 shallower defects, and studies are underway to evaluate the effect of this variable. We do not
238 view the constraining of humeral translation as a limitation. While this restriction may not fully
239 replicate the in-vivo kinematics of the glenohumeral joint, it was imposed in order to study the
240 effect of HSD size in isolation. As part of our future work we intend to evaluate mixed effects of
241 humeral translation, defect orientation, and various joint motions. Examining more detailed
242 depictions of shoulder rhythm is a further means of improving the efficacy of results.

243 **CONCLUSIONS**

244 Isolated glenohumeral joint rotation, without joint translation, results in Hill-Sachs defect
245 engagement. The rate of engagement increased with defects $>30.0\%$ of the humeral head
246 diameter, and defects smaller than that did not engage. Therefore, if these smaller Hill-Sachs
247 defects clinically engage, we suspect that some degree of joint translation must be present.
248 Additionally, as Hill-Sachs defects increased in size, the joint angle when engagement occurred
249 significantly decreased.

250

251 **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

252 The authors would like to acknowledge funding provided by the Natural Science and Engineering
253 Research Council of Canada.

254

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310
311

1 **Figure Legend**

2

3 **Figure 1** – Computer models of the humerus and scapula used during simulations, along with the glenoid coordinate
4 system (A). In the position of apprehension, a line was drawn parallel to the anterior glenoid rim, representing the
5 orientation of the Hill-Sachs defect on the humeral head (B). A Hill-Sachs defect created on the posterosuperior
6 humeral head (C).

7

8 **Figure 2** – Four points measuring the maximum superior/inferior length and anterior/posterior width of the glenoid
9 rim were used to orient a coordinate system. The blue axis is perpendicular to the plane created by these four points,
10 and was used to measure the medial/lateral movement of the humerus with respect to the glenoid during simulations.

11

12 **Figure 3** – Positioning of the humerus with respect to the scapula to orient the model in the desired testing position.
13 The simulation position included 90° of abduction, comprised of 60° of glenohumeral abduction and 30° of scapular
14 elevation in the sagittal plane (A), 60° of humeral external rotation (B), and 60° of abduction in the anterior plane.
15 From this position, the humerus was horizontally extended while maintaining the level of humeral abduction and
16 external rotation (C).

17

18 **Figure 4** – Normalized medial/lateral displacement data of the humerus for a shoulder specimen with different Hill-
19 Sachs defect sizes. In cases of ≥ 2 mm medial movement of the humeral head, the defect has engaged the anterior
20 glenoid rim and the humeral head has dislocated medially. An angle of 0° corresponds to the humerus lying in the
21 scapular plane.

22

23 **Figure 5** – Computer simulation of horizontal humeral extension range of motion due to pure rotation with a 45.0%
24 Hill-Sachs defect. Engagement is defined by ≥ 2 mm medial movement of the humerus normalized to the intact
25 condition. The figure illustrates 60 degrees of horizontal extension (A), 30 degrees of extension (B), pre-engagement
26 (C) and engagement with dislocation (D).

27

28 **Figure 6** – The occurrence of engagement for various sized Hill-Sachs defects. There was a significant increase in
29 the number of 45.0% defects that engaged in comparison to the 37.5% defect (†: $p < 0.001$) and the 30.0% defect
30 states (*: $p = 0.032$).

31
32 **Figure 7** – Angle of humeral extension range of motion corresponding to Hill-Sachs defect engagement. Angles are
33 in relation to the scapular plane, where positive° = anterior to plane, negative° = posterior to plane. The error bars
34 represent 1 standard deviation. Differences in engagement angle between defect sizes were significant for all
35 possible comparisons (*: $p < 0.001$).

36
37 **Figure 8** – Percentage of dislocating Hill-Sachs defects at various joint angles. As Hill-Sachs defects increased in
38 size, the angle of engagement decreased. Angles are in relation to the scapular plane, where positive° = anterior to
39 plane, negative° = posterior to plane.

40

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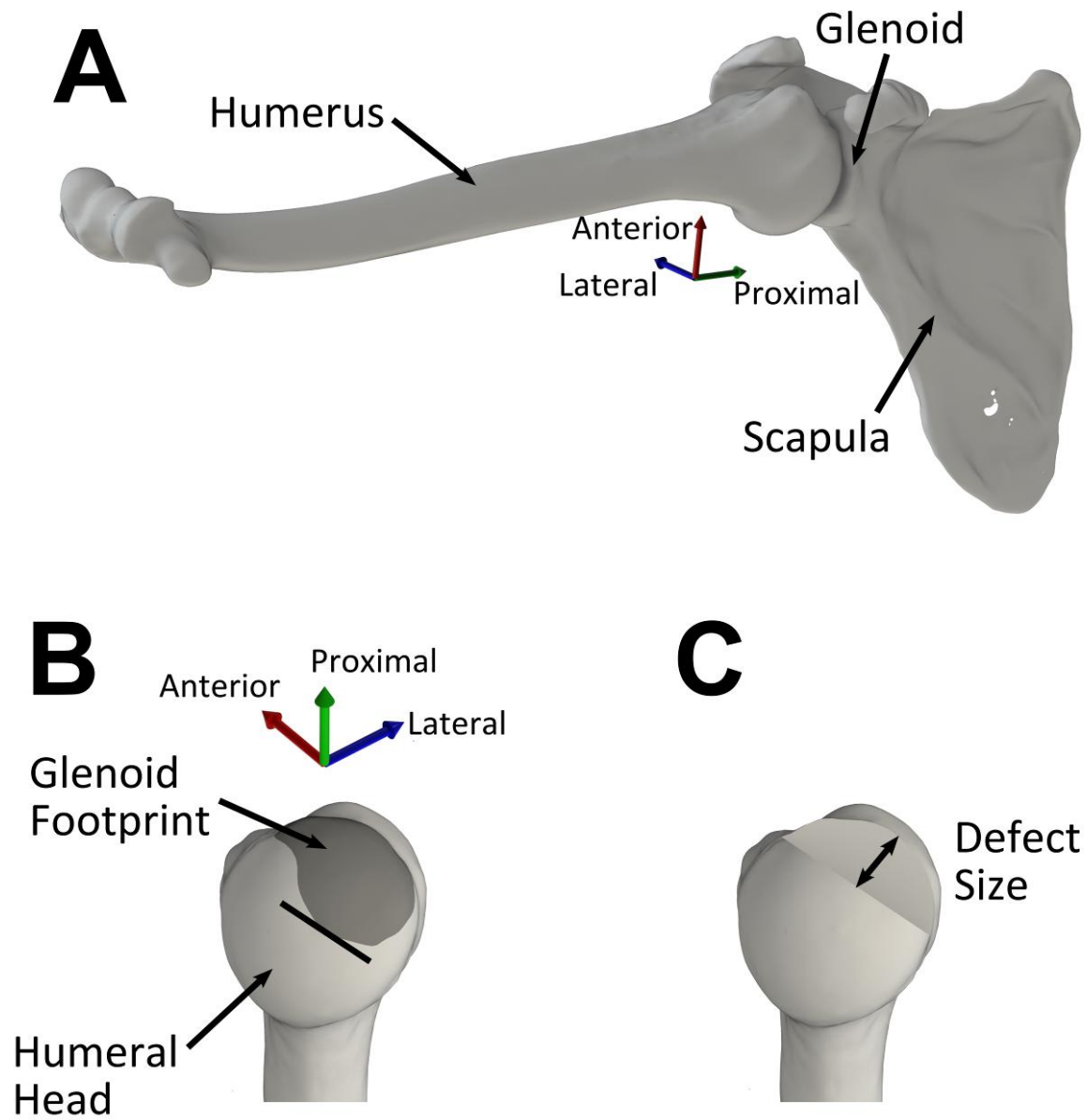


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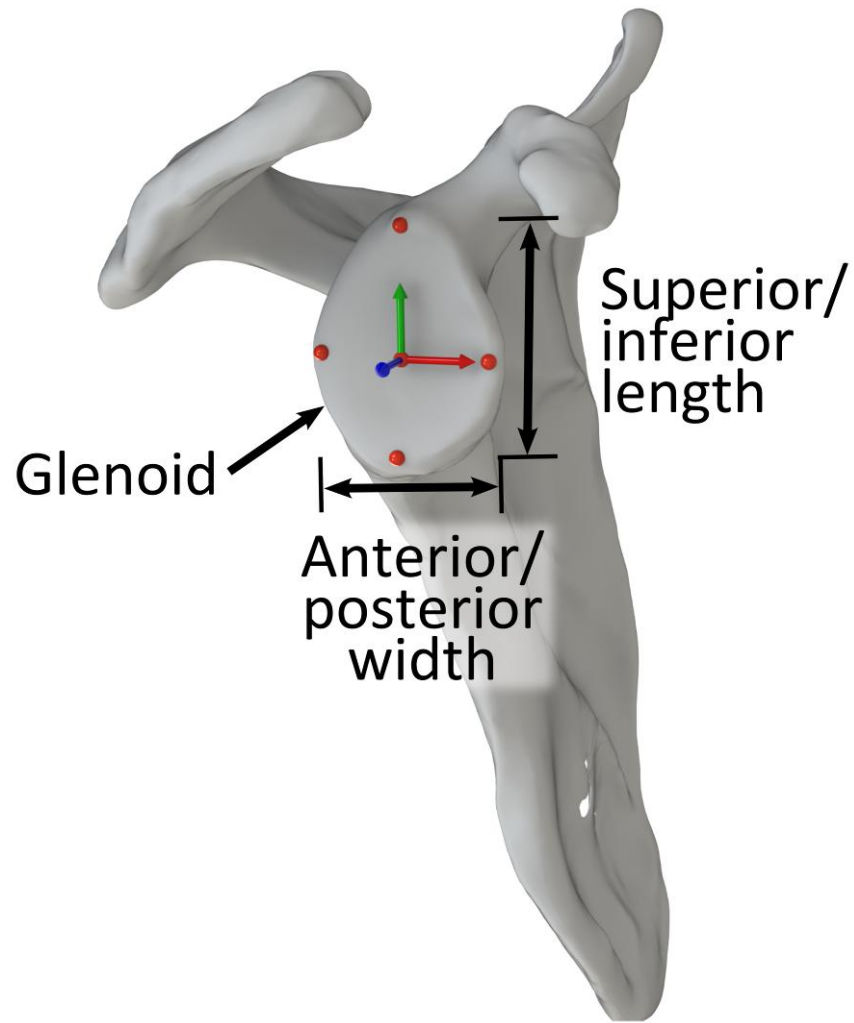


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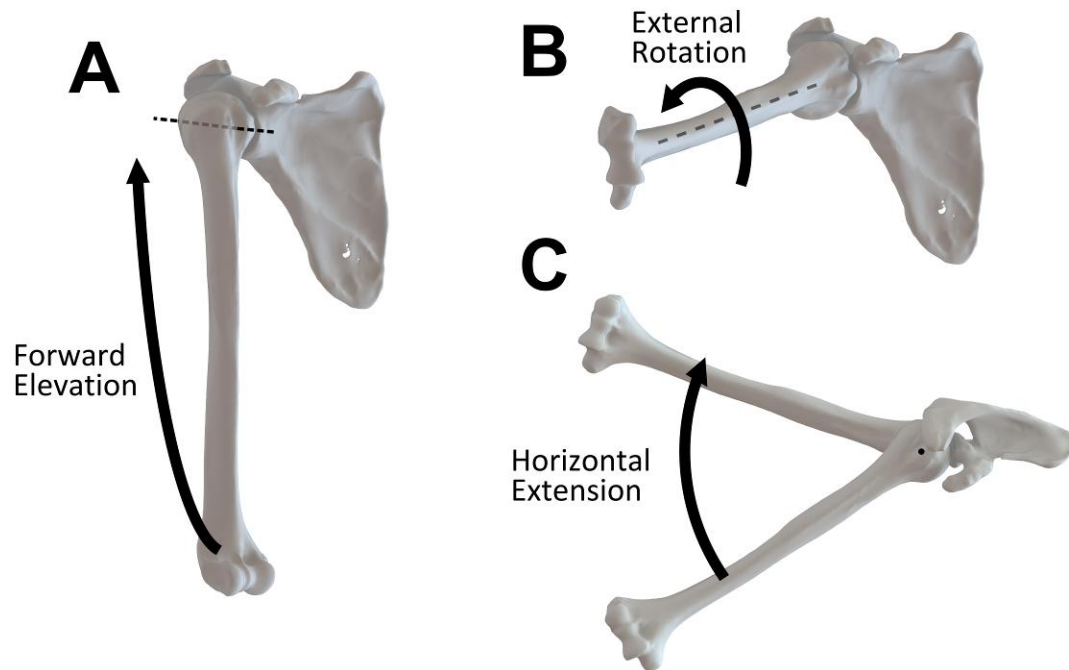


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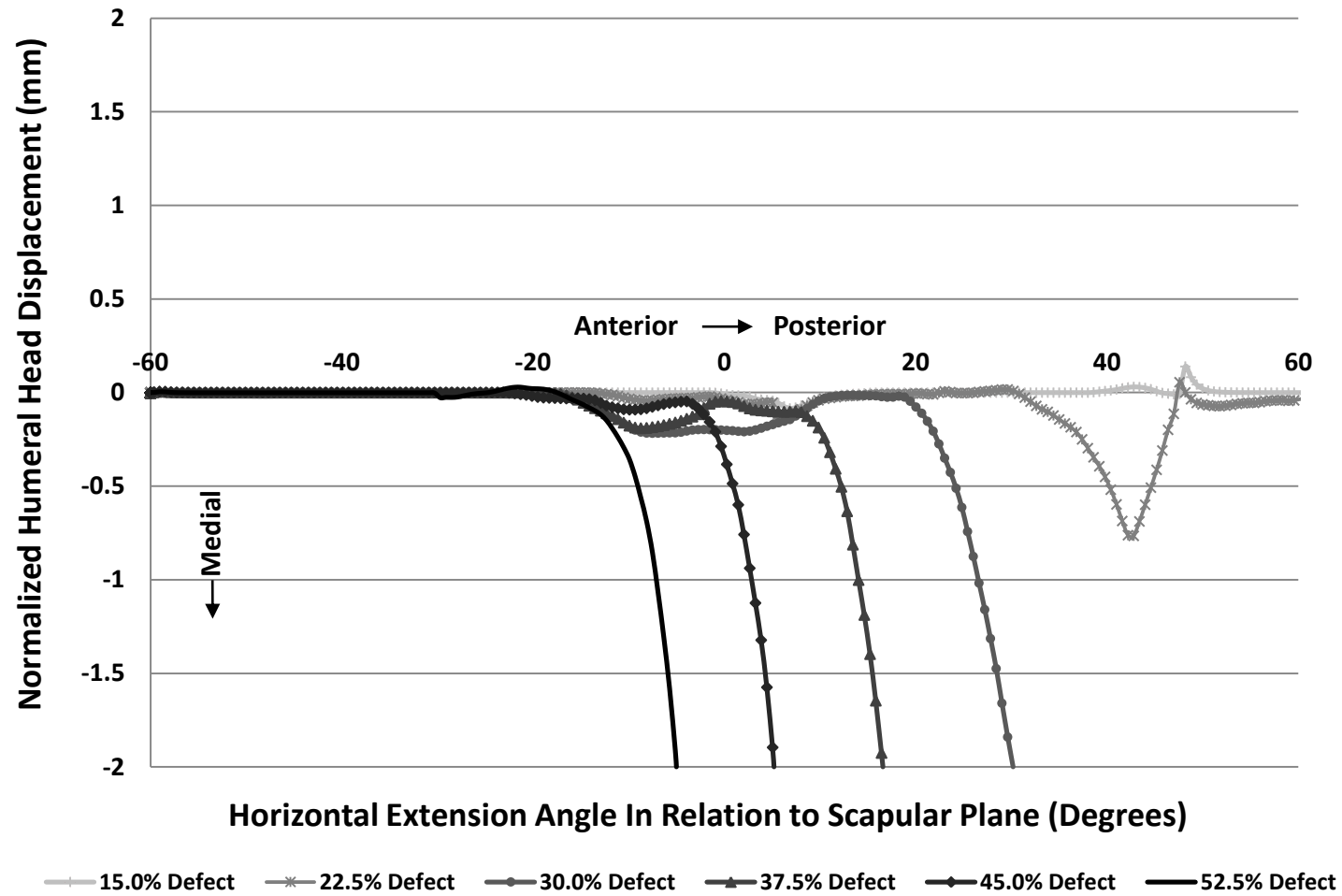


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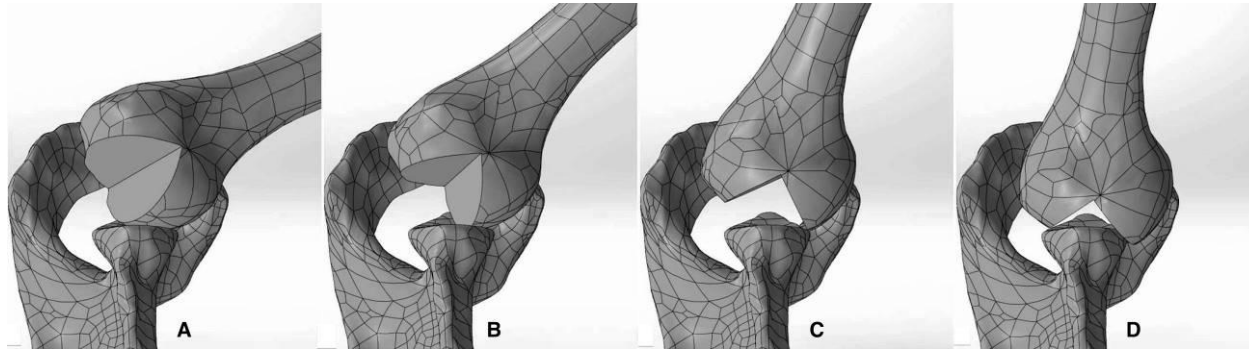


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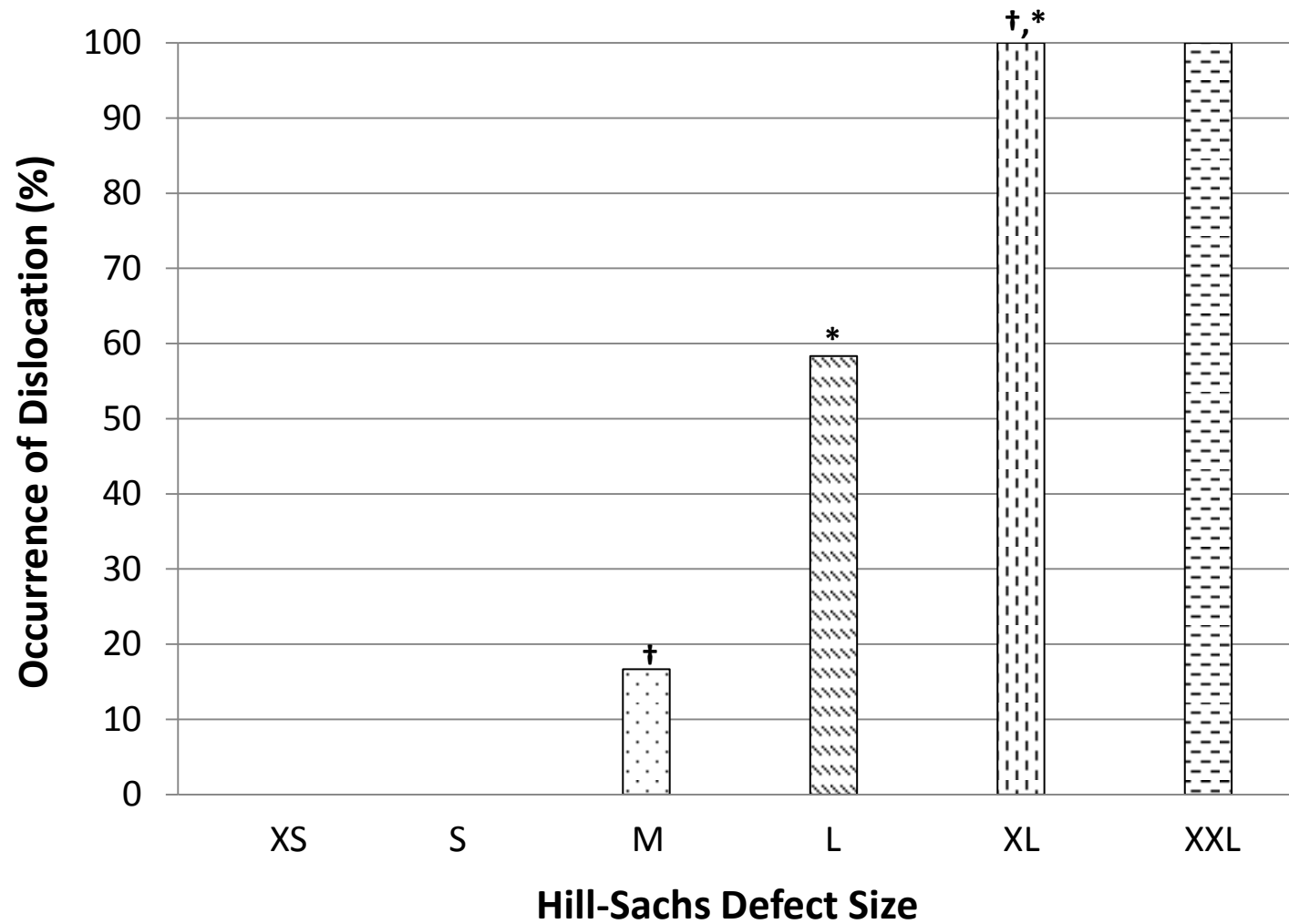


Figure 7

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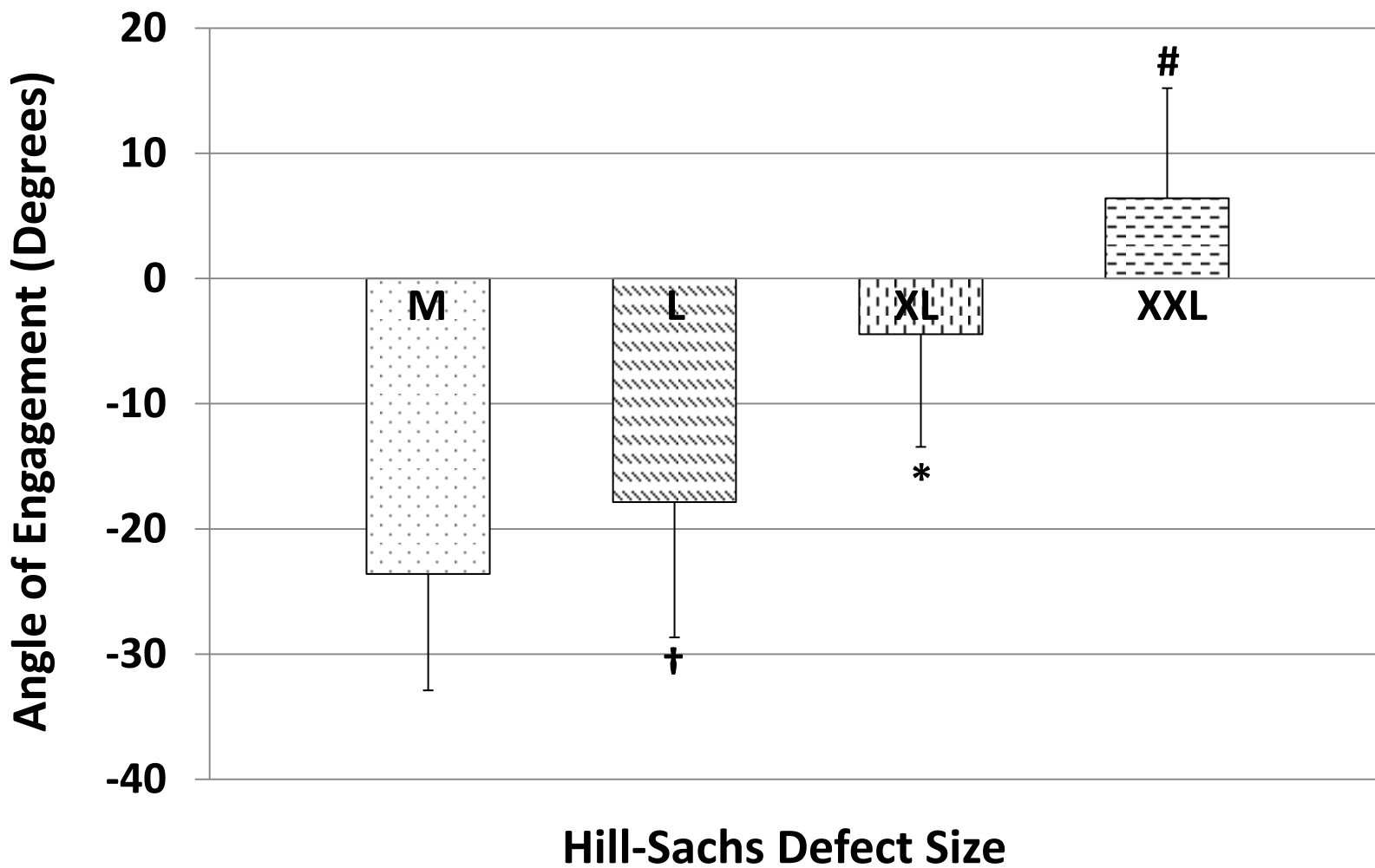


Figure 8

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