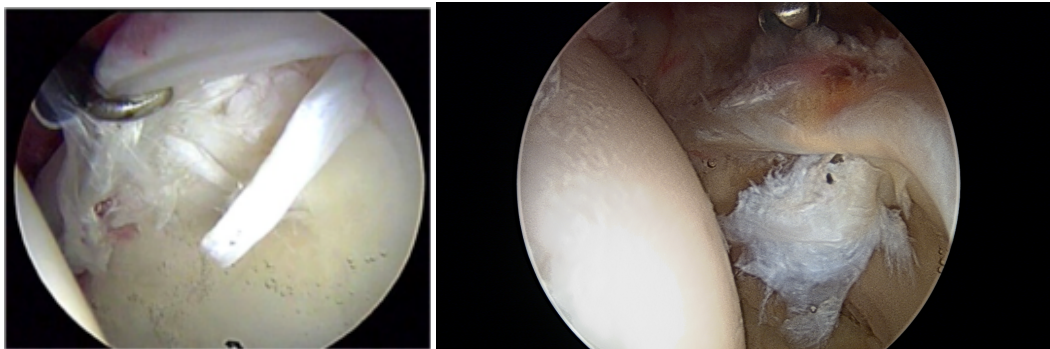


Labral tears

The hip joint works together as a ball and socket joint. The ball stays located and “sealed” in the socket with the help of a thick, sturdy ring of fibrous cartilage called the labrum. It circles around the hip socket, deepens the area for the ball to rest in, and helps keep the joint stabilized and lubricated. The labrum is firmly attached to the both the bone around the hip and the cartilage that lines the joint surfaces. It is a fairly hardy structure – tearing rarely occurs under normal circumstances. Some type of trauma (acute or chronic) has to occur to cause injury to this part of the hip joint. Acute falls or high energy trauma can cause tears of the cartilage around the hip joint, but most cases are a result of abnormal anatomy present thru development (femoroacetabular impingement – FAI). When this abnormal anatomy around the hip joint is present, the labrum can be repeatedly pinched over time, leading to frank tearing of the labrum off the bone. This can cause damage to the underlying joint cartilage, which can progress to arthritis if left unchecked.



Labral tears usually result in groin pain that is deep, sharp, and reproducible. Movements that flex the hip cause the pain, and this discomfort is usually worse with increased activity. It can sometimes present in the buttocks or lateral hip depending on the location of the tear. Most labral problems can be detected with the help of an MRI scan using contrast injected into the joint. When the diagnosis is still in question, an injection into the hip joint with local anesthetic can help distinguish if the hip joint is the problem.

Oral medication and activity modification are rarely helpful. Tears of the labrum usually require surgery to address the problems. Hip arthroscopy can be used to diagnose the reasons for the tear and address both the tear itself and in cases of impingement, address the conditions leading to the tear. The minimally invasive nature of the procedure allows for rapid recovery and rehabilitation – allowing return to activity in a timely manner.

