



WHAT IS A HIP LABRAL TEAR?

A labral tear is defined as a tearing of the connective tissue within the hip joint.

ANATOMY:

The hip is a ball and socket joint that occurs between the head of the femur (ball) and the acetabulum (socket). The labrum helps to increase the depth of the socket and acts as a suction to keep the hip stable within the acetabulum. The labrum has a cushioning and weight-bearing role during gait.

CAUSES OF LABRAL TEARS:

- Traumatic sporting injury normally involving rapid direction changes;
- Motor vehicle accidents;
- Through long time usage such as marathon runners;
- Twisting the hip whilst weight bearing.

DIAGNOSIS:

A thorough subjective and objective examination will assess the current history of the condition. The physiotherapist will perform some provocation tests to which the hip is moved into certain positions. Positive findings can include pain, clicking or catching. MRI or CT scan may also be necessary to help with a definitive diagnosis.



SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS:

- Pain into the hip, pelvis and/or lower back
- Audible popping or snapping sensation at the time of injury
- Pain when weight bearing or twisting the leg e.g. getting into a vehicle
- Clicking or catching of the hip
- General hip tenderness



PHYSIOTHERAPY TREATMENT OPTIONS:

- Massage
- Exercise and strengthening programs
- Joint mobility techniques
- Mobilization with movement
- Weight loss, food and lifestyle strategies
- Hydrotherapy
- Stretching program
- Dry Needling
- Education
- RICER
- Pain relief strategies
- Electrotherapy
- Pilates
- Gait retraining

OTHER INTERVENTIONS:

In the past a significant number of labral tears have require surgical intervention although there has been a paradigm shift recently and many patients are getting positive outcome without resorting to surgery.

PROGNOSIS:

Prognosis following a labral tear can vary significantly. Minor tears can resolve quickly and a return to sport can be possible in 3-6 weeks. If surgery is required it may be a 3-9 month recovery depending on the damage to the labrum and surgical intervention. More significant tears treated conservatively can require long term strengthening a rehabilitation programs.