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## Hip Impingement

### What is hip impingement?

Hip impingement (im-PINJ-ment) is when two bones rub against each other in the hip joint. It is also called femoroacetabular impingement (FEM-uh-ro-ASS-uh-TAB-yoo-lar im-PINJ-ment, or FAI for short). The hip joint has two bones that fit together like a ball in a socket (see drawing). In some people, these bones press against each other and cause pain. Tissue called the labrum (LAY-brum) cushions the hip joint. Hip impingement can injure the labrum. This causes pain and can lead to arthritis if it is not treated.

### Why does it happen?

Most people with hip impingement have an unusually shaped hip joint that causes the bones to press against each other. Typically this is something that is related to the way your bones developed during childhood. Occasionally, a hip injury can cause changes in the shape of the bones and result in impingement.

### How can I tell if I have it?

Hip impingement typically causes pain in the groin, thigh, and/or side of the hip. You might have pain when you sit for a long time, lean forward to put on socks or shoes, bend your hip in lunges or tuck positions, get in or out of a car, or pivot when playing sports.

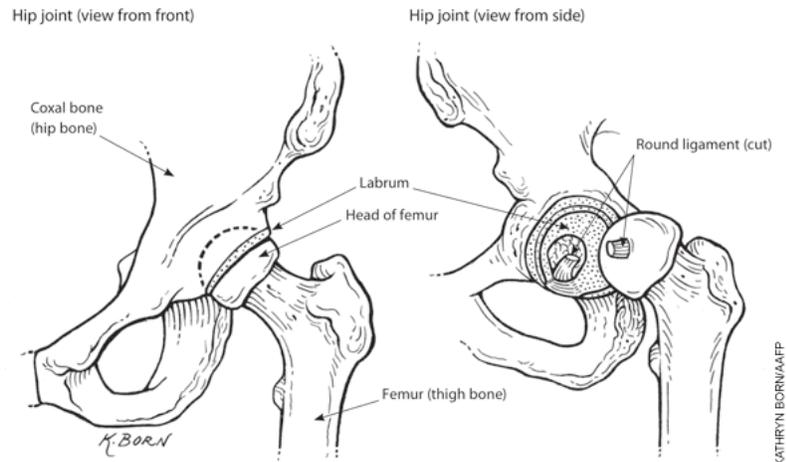
Talk to your doctor if you are having hip problems. He or she will examine your hip while moving it in different directions. X-rays help to determine signs of hip impingement. You might need to have an MRI to determine the extent of damage to the hip joint.

### How is it treated?

There are various ways to treat hip impingement. You can continue to exercise, yet avoid extreme hip flexion, in general keep your hip flexion below 90 (ninety) degrees. Talk to your doctor to see if injections into the hip joint might be helpful.

Many believe that hip flexion is the answer, since your joint may feel stiff with movement, this can actually increase your symptoms, so controlled exercise with a physical therapist is a good way to start exercise following a diagnosis.

If your pain persists, despite avoiding activities that could increase your symptoms your doctor may refer you to an orthopedic surgeon to discuss if surgery may be the right option for you.



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