



## **What is Arthroscopic Hip Surgery?**

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, arthroscopic surgery became popular, especially in the sports world, as fiber optic technology enabled surgeons to see inside the body using a small telescope, called an “arthroscope,” which projects an image to a television monitor.

Thanks to ongoing improvements made by technology leaders like Smith & Nephew Endoscopy, the benefits of arthroscopic surgery for knee and shoulder conditions have been experienced by patients all over the world. By adopting techniques and instruments similar to those used in knee and shoulder procedures, arthroscopic hip surgery has become a more widely-used treatment option for those who suffer from hip pain.

Arthroscopic procedures may be used for a variety of hip conditions, primarily the treatment of labral tears, hip impingement, articular cartilage injuries, and the removal of loose bodies in the joint. Other less frequent conditions treated through hip arthroscopy include tendon or ligament injuries, hip instability, and an inflamed or damaged synovium. Because all of these conditions may eventually lead to hip arthritis, treating them with arthroscopic procedures may be a beneficial option for patients.

## **Who is a Candidate for Arthroscopic Hip Surgery?**

Through an incision the width of a straw tip, your surgeon is able to insert a scope, which allows him or her to inspect the joint and locate the source of your pain. Your surgeon will then make one or more small incisions to accommodate the instruments used to treat the hip. These instruments can shave, trim, cut, stitch, or smooth the damaged areas.

Arthroscopic hip surgery is usually performed in an outpatient surgery centre, which means no overnight hospital stay is required. You report to the surgical centre in the morning, undergo the procedure, and – following a recovery period under the care of medical professionals – return home later in the day.

In the past, patients suffering from hip problems had limited options. In most cases, they were forced to live with the pain until a total hip replacement was required. With the advent of arthroscopic hip surgery, however, there are now less invasive treatment options available that can provide relief or significant improvement for a number of conditions.

Most people who suffer pain or experience decreased mobility due to hip impingement, labral tears, cartilage injuries, loose bodies in the joint, or other conditions may benefit from a minimally invasive surgical procedure. The information here will help you better understand the anatomy and function of the hip and will guide you through the steps of arthroscopic surgery used to treat hip conditions.

## **Nonsurgical Options / Reasons for Arthroscopic Hip Surgery**

## Nonsurgical Options

Prior to undergoing any surgical procedures, there are some non-operative, conservative options for treating your hip pain that may be considered. They include the following:

1. **Physical Therapy.** An exercise program may be prescribed to strengthen the muscles in the **hip joint and in many** cases improve positioning of the hip and relieve pain.
2. **Anti-Inflammatory Medications.** Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs or NSAIDs, may help temporarily treat inflammation and pain in the hip joint. Please note, however, that all medications have risks and should only be taken under the direction of your physician.
3. **Corticosteroid Treatment.** In some cases, your doctor may prescribe corticosteroids, such as prednisone or cortisone, if NSAIDs do not relieve pain. Please note, however, that all medications have risks and should only be taken under the direction of your physician.

## Reasons for Arthroscopic Hip Surgery

Arthroscopic hip surgery is considered when other conservative measures have not provided the required pain relief. It's a positive measure to regain your active lifestyle that hip pain is preventing.

Arthroscopic hip surgery may:

- Relieve pain
- Improve joint stability
- Remove loose bodies
- Repair tears and damage
- Delay the onset of osteoarthritis
- Delay the need for a total hip replacement
- Improve quality of life
- Optimize activities of daily living

## Treatment of Hip Impingement

With hip impingement treatment, your surgeon will reshape the junction between the head and neck of the femur using small mechanical resection devices called burrs. Performing this step as well as trimming any excessive portion of the acetabulum will give the joint more clearance, thus relieving the impingement. At various times during the surgery and immediately following it, your surgeon will test and monitor your hip's range of motion.

### Treatment of Labral Tears

In this procedure, your surgeon will smooth the edges of the torn or frayed labrum using arthroscopic shaver blades or radiofrequency (RF) energy. Specially designed RF probes include flexible heads that allow your doctor to manoeuvre through difficult curves in the hip joint, remove torn tissue, and smooth the damaged areas. In some cases, the labrum may be repaired. For this procedure, anchors will be attached to the bone and sutures will be passed through the tissue. The anchors are used to hold the suture in place.

### Treatment of Articular Cartilage Injuries

To treat articular cartilage injuries, your surgeon will use an arthroscopic shaver blade to remove the damaged tissue, leaving a smooth, stable surface. Certain types of injuries may require treatment with microfracture. In this procedure, your surgeon will create a number of small holes in the exposed bone of the joint to induce bleeding and clotting, which also leads to new tissue growth. Studies indicate that in time, this new growth becomes firm tissue that is smooth and durable.

### Loose Body Removal

When removing loose bodies, your surgeon will first use the visibility provided by the arthroscope to inspect the joint. This inspection will help confirm the number of loose bodies and their location. Your surgeon will then retrieve and remove the loose bodies using specially designed hand instruments called graspers.

### Preparation for Arthroscopic Hip Surgery

Preparation for your surgery begins weeks and sometimes months before the surgery date. Here are just a few things you should expect.

1. **Initial Surgical Consultation.** Preoperative X-rays, a complete medical history, a complete surgical history, and a complete list of all medications (i.e., prescription, over-the-counter, vitamin supplements) and allergies will be reviewed.
2. **Complete Physical Examination.** Your surgeon will perform a physical examination and determine if your internist or family physician should assist with optimization of medical conditions prior to the surgery. This will ensure that you are in the best physical condition possible on surgery day.
3. **Physical Therapy.** Instruction in an exercise program to begin prior to the surgery, as well as an overview of the rehabilitation process after surgery, will better prepare you

for postoperative care.

4. **Personal Preparation.** Loose-fitting clothing is recommended. You should bring your insurance information and a list of all your medications and dosages as well as drug allergies.
5. **Evening Before Surgery.** Your surgeon may recommend that you do not eat or drink after midnight. Your surgeon or anaesthesia provider may also recommend that you take some of your routine prescription medications with a sip of water.

### Day of Surgery

This is a brief overview of the activities that typically occur on your surgery day:

1. You will be admitted to the hospital or surgery centre.
2. Your vital signs, such as blood pressure and temperature, will be measured.
3. A clean hospital gown will be provided.
4. All jewelry, dentures, contact lenses, and nail polish must be removed.
5. An IV will be started to give you fluids and medication during and after the procedure.
6. Your hip will be scrubbed and shaved in preparation for surgery.
7. An anaesthesia provider will discuss the type of anaesthesia that will be used.
8. Your surgeon will confirm and initial the correct surgical site.