Outpatient Interventions for Femoral Acetabular Impingement Complicated by Hip Osteoarthritis, Labral Tear and L5 Sacralization: A Case Report

Brianna Palmer, BS
University of New England

**Background**
- Femoral Acetabular Impingement (FAI) is a known cause of hip pain in adolescents and young adults produced by altered hip joint mechanics.
- Types of FAI include Cam deformity, Pincer deformity or a combination.
- Abnormal abutment of the femoral head on the acetabular rim, especially during hip flexion and internal rotation (IR) causes a sharp, pinching pain in the groin and lateral hip.
- Chronic FAI can lead to hip osteoarthritis (OA) and labral and/or chondral defects.
- It is unknown if there is a correlation between FAI and sacralization.

**Patient History**
- TS was a 42 year old female who presented with complaints of left (L) hip pain and decreased functional tolerance.
- Activity Limitations included L sidelying, walking, navigating stairs, lower body dressing, sleeping, and squatting.
- X-rays had confirmed FAI and hip OA.

**PT Examination Findings**
- Impaired Gait: narrow base of support, decreased trunk rotation and arm swing, decreased step length, L toe out, and loss of balance with turning 180°
- Impaired Posture:
  - Strength deficits grossly in each lower extremity (LE), especially on the left
  - Core strength deficits
  - Decreased L hip joint mobility
  - Decreased L hip range of motion (ROM)
  - Decreased active trunk ROM
  - Fair balance on L with pain provocation
  - Positive findings for FABER, Thomas Test, Ober’s Test, Resisted Straight Leg Raise, Log Roll, FAI/Impingement Test, FADDIR, Hip Scour and Hip Distraction on the L

**Interventions**
- **Manual Therapy:** Soft tissue massage to low back and hip musculature; Strain Counterstrain for iliopsoas (per Jones) and Joint Mobilizations and Distractions of the L hip (per Kaltenborn)
- **Therapeutic Exercise:** Stretching for iliobial band, rectus femoris, hamstrings, piriformis, gastrocnemius and iliopsoas; ROM for trunk and L hip; Strenthening for abdominals, hip prime movers, gluteus muscles, quadriceps and hamstrings
- **Neuromuscular Re-education:** Balance Training; Proprioceptive Neuromuscular Facilitation (PNF) (per O’Sullivan)
- **Therapeutic Activities:** Stair Training, Foam Rolling, Gait Training

**Outcomes**
- After 10 treatments, TS had self-reported gains to lower body dressing, household chores, stair navigation, walking, and sleeping.
  - Lower extremity MMT > 4/5 throughout
  - Tissue extensibility improved per negative Thomas and Ober’s Tests
  - Gait: only remaining deficit being a shortened stride length
  - SLS balance good; no pain provocation

**Discussion**
Interventions supported for youth or athletic populations were successful in treating TS’s diagnosis of FAI and surgical intervention could be deferred. By restoring proper movement patterns abnormal forces to the hip were reduced, allowing for the healing process to occur without strict activity modification. Her L5 sacralization had little impact on rehabilitation and low back pain resolved.

The author would like to acknowledge Amy Litterini, PT, DPT for assistance with case report conceptualization and Sylvie Le, PT, DPT for supervision and assistance.