

## Shoulder Slap Tear

A SLAP (superior labrum, anterior to posterior) tear is an injury to the labrum on the top part of your shoulder (closest to your head). The labrum is a 360-degree ring around the shoulder socket that keeps your arm bone in the shoulder socket. The labrum can tear because of an injury, such as falling on your shoulder or outstretched arm, or by doing sports involving throwing (baseball, softball, water polo, volleyball or tennis).

## Symptoms

Symptoms of a SLAP tear may include:

- Painful popping, clicking, or catching in the shoulder
- Pain when you move your arm over your head or reach back
- Pain when you throw a ball
- Pain felt deep inside the shoulder

## Diagnosis

A SLAP tear can be difficult to diagnose, as symptoms can mimic other problems in the shoulder. If your exam is consistent with a SLAP tear, you may be a candidate for an MRI with a special dye injected into your shoulder to help visualize the labrum. Arthroscopic surgery is the only sure way to know if you have a SLAP tear.

## Treatment

A SLAP tear can be treated with surgery; however, the first step in treatment is to see whether anti-inflammatory medicines and physical therapy can take care of the problem. Physical therapy includes taking part in a home-exercise program, working out with a therapist, and avoiding activities that cause pain.