Dr. Ryan Nunley, MD:
Groin pain is a common complaint in people who have hip problems. Many times people think their groin pain is due to a pulled groin muscle, but it can be frequently due to an irritation inside the hip joint. Groin pain that comes from the hip typically develops slowly over time without a specific injury or trauma. It is worse when the hip is flexed, for example, while sitting in a low chair or while driving. Over time people with groin pain may notice some stiffness and decreased motion in their hip. The pain is usually a dull ache at baseline but can become a sharp, stabbing pain when the hip turned into certain positions.

Common hip disorders that present with groin pain include: labral tears, cartilage damage inside the joint, hip impingement problems, and arthritis. A physical examination and hip x-rays can help determine if there is a structural or mechanical problem in or around the hip that can be the source of the pain. The treatment options for these conditions vary depending on the problem. Treatments typically start with physical therapy and anti-inflammatory medications, but other more advanced treatments may be recommended and these include: injections, hip arthroscopy, and hip resurfacing or replacement.

While not all groin pain needs medical evaluation, people who have recurrent episodes of groin pain, or pain that continues to get worse over time, might benefit from an evaluation by an orthopedic hip surgeon.

*Ryan Nunley, MD, is a Hip and Knee Surgeon at Washington University Orthopedics. To learn more about Dr. Nunley, visit www.ortho.wustl.edu/Nunley.*