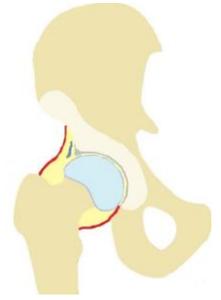


Transient synovitis (irritable hip)



Orthopaedic Information Sheet

Transient synovitis (irritable hip) is the most common cause of a painful limp in active children over 4 years of age. It occurs when the lining of the hip joint becomes inflamed with extra fluid. The pressure inside the hip joint from the fluid can be painful and cause a child to limp. A recent viral illness or injury to the area are usually associated with this condition. It is not a serious condition and will get better on its own within two weeks.

Symptoms

- Limp or refusal to walk
- Pain in any of these areas: hip, groin, thigh or knee
- Usually only one side is affected
- Some other conditions that require treatment can mimic transient synovitis.

It is important that you speak with your child's doctor/orthopaedic registrar at WCH via hospital switchboard (08 81617000) if any of the following are present:

- Under 4 years of age and limping or refusing to walk/crawl and/or has pain with moving the hip
- Has a fever 38°C or higher
- Obvious swelling or redness on any part of the hip or leg
- Increasing pain not relieved by paracetamol or ibuprofen
- Pain in their leg or hip while at rest
- Unable to put weight through the affected leg/hip
- Not improving after a few days of rest or has not completely recovered back to their usual abilities after two weeks.

Home Care

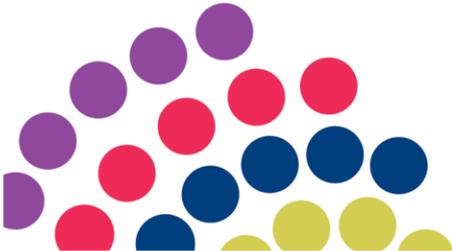
Rest at home helps your child recover from an irritable hip on its own. Your child will naturally sit or lie in a position that is more comfortable for them. You should see an improvement after a few days but it can take up to two weeks. Once you start to see an improvement you can allow your child to do their usual activities but avoid active play or sports until they are completely better.

Medicines

Anti-inflammatory medicines such as ibuprofen can help reduce the pain and swelling in the hip. Refer to the medicine packet/bottle for directions of use. Never give aspirin to children under the age of 12. Antibiotics are not needed as the condition is not caused by a bacterial infection.

Summary

- Irritable hip is the most common cause of a limp in children over 4 years of age
- Symptoms usually self-resolve within two weeks without long term effects on the hip
- Rest and anti-inflammatory medicine such ibuprofen can help relieve symptoms
- Antibiotics are not needed as this condition is not caused by a bacterial infection.



For more information

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