

# Irritable Hip in Children

Irritable hip is the most common cause of hip pain and/or limping in children. It is also known as transient synovitis. It usually gets better by itself within 1-2 weeks. It is most often seen in children aged 3-10 years. The pain and limp are due to inflammation of the lining of the joint and increased fluid inside the joint. This leaflet explains more about this condition.

## What are the symptoms of irritable hip?

Irritable hip usually causes a limp. Moving and putting weight on the leg may be uncomfortable or painful.

Children may also have a mildly raised temperature and some children may have recently experienced a viral illness such as a cold, a sore throat or diarrhoea and vomiting.

Children with an irritable hip will get better between about 3 days to 2 weeks.

## What causes irritable hip to happen?

The exact cause is unknown, but it often follows a viral infection or minor injury.

## What is the treatment?

- Irritable hip is short lasting and usually gets better without any treatment within a week or two.
- Pain relief such as ibuprofen or paracetamol can help recovery.
- Your child should rest until the symptoms have resolved.
- If the symptoms last longer than 2 weeks then your child's doctor may arrange further investigations.
- Your child will usually have a follow up appointment at the hospital or with your GP to check that their symptoms have resolved completely.

## What else could it be?

You are being given this leaflet as we think your child has irritable hip. It is important to consider other causes of a painful joint such as infection of a bone or joint (septic arthritis or osteomyelitis). Sometimes it may be necessary to do blood tests and other investigations such as an x-ray or ultrasound to confirm the diagnosis.

## Once at home when should you seek further medical advice?

- If your child develops a temperature of 38 degrees or more
- If your child's pain becomes significantly worse
- If your child becomes more unwell in themselves (e.g. not wanting to eat, more sleepy)
- If your child develops any pain, swelling or redness in any other joints
- If your child still has pain and/or a limp after 2 weeks

**Children's Ward telephone numbers: 01225 824421 or 824813 (24 hours a day)**

## Are there long term complications?

Irritable hip will get better by itself and not cause any long term problems with the joint.

## Key points to remember

- Irritable hip is the commonest cause of a limp in children.
- It is generally a mild condition that will get better on its own with rest within 2 weeks.
- Pain relief such as ibuprofen and paracetamol may help recovery.

## Further information

Your GP, hospital doctor or health visitor will be happy to give further advice

NHS website: <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions>

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/irritable-hip/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

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Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital. Email [ruh-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ruh-tr.pals@nhs.net) or telephone 01225 825656.