

What is the likelihood of this occurring again in my child?

- A small number of children with irritable hip go on to have further episodes. We estimate the recurrence rate is about 10 per cent. This means that one in 10 children will experience another episode of irritable hip.

Reference sources

- https://www.rch.org.au/kidsinfo/fact_sheets/Transient_synovitis/

Disclaimer

This information is intended to support, not replace, discussion with your doctor or healthcare professionals. The authors of these consumer health information handouts have made a considerable effort to ensure the information is accurate, up to date and easy to understand.

Contact details

Paediatric Emergency Department

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PALS and Advocacy contact details

Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

Telephone: 01483 402757

Email: rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net

Opening hours: 9.00am–3.00pm
Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

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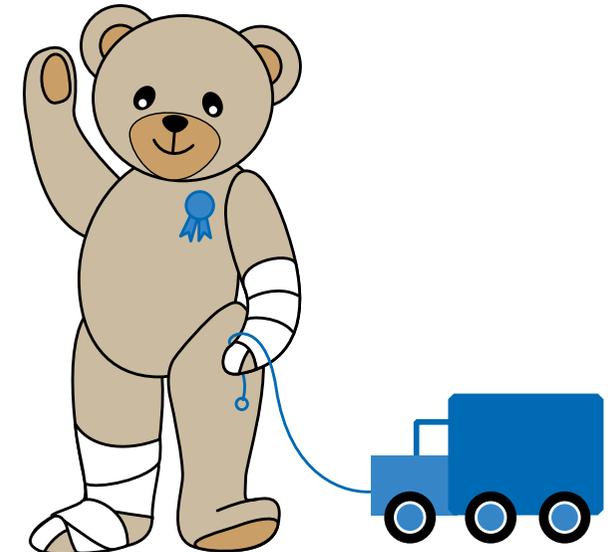
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Irritable Hip / Transient Synovitis

Paediatric Emergency Department



Patient information leaflet

This leaflet explains what might be causing your child's limp and what treatment is required.

Transient synovitis (sin-oh-vie-tis), commonly called irritable hip, is the most common cause of limping in children. It is due to inflammation (swelling) of the lining of the hip joint.

What causes transient synovitis?

In most cases of irritable hip, your child will have recently had a viral infection. Sometimes, the condition occurs after a fall or injury.

Irritable hip is most often seen in children aged between three and ten years old. It is not serious, and will get better on its own with rest.

What are the signs and symptoms?

- If your child has irritable hip they may have a limp or difficulty crawling or standing. They may complain of pain in the hip, groin, thigh or knee.
- Some children may just be refusing to walk, without explanation.
- Usually only one side is affected.

What tests does my child need?

Transient synovitis cannot be detected using x-rays so it is in the child's best interests to prevent radiation where possible. On some occasions, where it is not clear whether there may have been an injury, an x-ray may be performed to rule out a bone injury.

Usually, no specific tests are required when suspecting irritable hip, as it is a clinical diagnosis (this means it is diagnosed on examination of your child by ruling out more serious problems).

What treatment does my child need?

Irritable hip is a mild condition that will get better on its own. Complete rest is usually all that is needed. It should start to improve in about three days and be better in two weeks.

Does my child need any medicine?

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen, are helpful for irritable hip as they relieve the pain as well as reducing inflammation. Give the ibuprofen according to packet directions regularly for 48 hours. Paracetamol may also help with reducing the pain.

Antibiotics are not given as the condition is not caused by a bacterial infection.

How should I care for my child at home?

It is important to encourage your child to rest at home. They will naturally sit, crawl, walk or lie in the most comfortable position.

Allow your child to gradually go back to their usual activities as they improve, but they should not play sport or undertake any strenuous activities until they are completely better.

When should I seek further medical advice/re-attend for review?

You should see your GP or return to the Emergency Department (ED) immediately for review if your child:

- develops a fever or is otherwise unwell.
- develops an obvious swelling, redness or is hotter to touch on any part of the hip or leg.
- has increasing or persistent pain that is not relieved by ibuprofen or paracetamol.
- is in pain when they are at rest.
- completely stops weight bearing.
- is not starting to improve within three days or has not recovered fully in two weeks.

Common questions our doctors are asked:

Is this a serious illness and will there be any long term problems?

- Whilst it can cause some pain irritable hip does not cause any long term problems and is not considered a serious illness.

If my child has had irritable hip, should I take him/her to a physiotherapist to get exercises so it won't happen again?

- Irritable hip cannot be prevented with any exercises, so seeing a physiotherapist is not usually required.