

# Transient Synovitis of the Hip

## Definition

- Transient synovitis is irritation of the hip joint. It causes a limp and pain in the hip or leg.
- This diagnosis is only made after medical exam by a doctor.
- Also called toxic synovitis or irritable hip.

## Health Information

### Symptoms

- The main symptom is pain in the hip. Children may also complain of pain in the groin, leg or knee.
- The pain is worse with movement of the hip compared to the other side and walking.
- The pain is worse with walking and your child may walk with a limp. Some children will refuse to walk.
- Usually only one side is affected.
- Fever is present in 30%.

### Cause

- Transient synovitis is caused by swelling of the lining (synovium) of the hip joint.
- It is often a reaction to a recent viral infection. This is more likely if there is a fever.
- Sometimes it can happen after minor or even normal trauma. Some youngsters like to jump off of furniture or steps. Landing with force can cause an impact injury to the hip joint. The pain then starts on the following day.
- It is most common in children aged 2-8. It is much more common in boys.

### Diagnosis: How is It Made

- The diagnosis of transient synovitis was made by a doctor, based on a medical history and physical exam of your child.
- Your doctor may also have ordered hip X-rays, an ultrasound or blood tests to confirm the diagnosis.

### Prevention

- If your child likes jumping off of things, discourage jumping from high surfaces.

## Care Advice

### 1. Key Points

- Transient synovitis can be treated at home.
- It is a mild hip problem that will get better on its own.
- Here is some care advice that should help.

### 2. Pain Medicine

- For pain relief, give acetaminophen every 4 hours or ibuprofen every 6 hours as needed (See Dosage table).
- Ibuprofen may be more effective for transient synovitis.

### 3. Heat

- Put heat on the sore area. Use a heat pack, heating pad or warm wet washcloth.
- Do this for 10 minutes, as needed. Reason: increases blood flow to the area and speeds healing.
- Caution: Avoid burns.

#### 4. **Rest and Return to Activity**

- Allow your child to rest while he has pain.
- As pain improves, slowly increase activity. Allow any activity that does not cause pain.
- Here's a good rule: If it HURTS, don't do it.

#### 5. **What to Expect**

- Pain will start to improve after 2 days. Symptoms may take 2 weeks to completely resolve.
- About 20% of children will have a repeat bout of transient synovitis. Most occur over the next 6 months.
- Transient synovitis will not cause lasting damage to your child's leg.

### **Call Your Doctor If**

- New fever occurs
- Walking becomes more painful
- Pain lasts over 2 weeks
- You think your child needs to be seen
- You have other questions or concerns

#### **Pediatric Care Advice**

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