

Transient Synovitis of the Hip

Transient synovitis of the hip is a common cause of pain and limping in children. The cause is unknown but may involve infection with a virus. Symptoms usually clear up in a few weeks. The doctor will monitor your child's recovery.

What is transient synovitis of the hip?

Transient synovitis of the hip is a condition causing sudden hip pain and limping in a young child. Usually, the child hasn't had any recent injury that could explain the pain. The condition is sometimes called "toxic synovitis."

The cause of transient synovitis of the hip isn't known for sure. Since it sometimes occurs shortly after a cold, infection with a virus may be the origin. In most cases, the condition is temporary and clears up in a few weeks.

What does it look like?

- Your child suddenly develops pain in one leg that causes him or her to limp.
- Your child may feel pain anywhere between the groin and the knee. Usually, there hasn't been a recent injury that could explain your child's pain.
- Most children have had a cold or mild respiratory infection a week or two before developing hip pain.
- Usually, no other symptoms are present. Your child may have a slight fever.

What causes transient synovitis of the hip?

The cause is unknown.

What are some possible complications?

Usually none. However, make sure your child gets follow-up medical care until the pain and limping are completely

gone. It's important to make sure that your child's hip pain doesn't result from some other disease, such as arthritis.

What puts your child at risk of transient synovitis of the hip?

There are no known risk factors. Transient synovitis of the hip can occur at any age but is most common between ages 3 and 8.

How is transient synovitis of the hip diagnosed and treated?

- There are several possible causes of hip pain and limping in children. Your doctor may take an x-ray or recommend other tests to look for some of these less obvious causes. It is most important to be sure the symptoms are not caused by bacterial infection of the hip joint or nearby bones.
- Your child should take it easy and rest more for a few days, depending on how his or her hip feels. The doctor will want to know if the pain and limping are getting any better or worse.
- Use medications such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen to reduce pain.

When should I call your office?

Call our office if your child's hip pain isn't better after 1 week. We may recommend further tests to make sure your child doesn't have some other cause of hip pain or limping. Also call our office if your child develops any additional symptoms, such as:

- High fever.
- Severe hip pain or pain in other joints.
- Inability to put any weight on the painful leg at all.
- Swelling or redness around the hip.