

Follow up care

If your child is no better, please attend any follow-up appointments recommended by your doctor or nurse. You can always ring to cancel the appointment if your child is completely back to normal.

As long as your child starts to improve within a few days and can move normally within 2 weeks, there will probably be no need for further investigations or treatments. Physiotherapy is not usually needed.

Please arrange for your child to see their GP if the pain happens again in the future.

Further Information

www.nhs.uk/conditions/hip-pain-children-irritable-hip/

www.nhs.uk/conditions/septic-arthritis/

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/developmental-dysplasia-of-the-hip/>

Useful numbers

Practice Plus (Brighton walk-in centre / GP service) 0333 321 0946
Open every day from 8am to 8pm, including bank holidays.
www.practiceplusbrightonstation.nhs.uk

For out of hours GP service or advice ring NHS 111

Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital
01273 696955 Ext. 62593
Children's Emergency Department

Please be aware that CED staff will not be able to give you medical advice for your child over the phone but can direct you to an appropriate service to assist with your enquiry.

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**Limping in
children**

Children's Emergency Department



Why is my child limping?

There are many causes of limping in children. Most of them are not serious and will get better by themselves.

'Irritable hip' (also called Transient synovitis), is the most common cause of limping in children. This is when the lining of the hip joint is inflamed. It is most often seen in children aged between 3 and 10 years old. It can happen after a virus or injury or sometimes for no apparent reason.

Your child may complain of pain in the hip, groin, thigh or knee. They may have difficulty walking which results in limping. Usually only one side is affected.

Although worrying for you, it is not a serious condition and will get better without treatment after one or two weeks.

Other, much less common causes of a limp may require further investigation and hospital treatment.

Your child's doctor or nurse practitioner will have considered these and thought them unlikely after listening to your child's story and examining them.

They may have organized blood tests and /or an x-ray to help decide, however not all children need these.

How can I look after my child at home?

Rest

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

You may wish to keep your child off school or nursery until they have started to improve. You can allow them to slowly go back to their usual activities. They should not play sport or do any energetic activities until they are completely better. Swimming is a good way to get the hip joint moving comfortably again.

Your child's pain and ability to move should start to improve in a few days and be completely better in two weeks.

Medicines

Anti-inflammatory pain medicines such as ibuprofen (Nurofen, Calprofen), are helpful as they relieve the pain as well as reducing inflammation. Follow the dosage instructions on the medicine bottle. Paracetamol (Calpol) may also help with pain.

Antibiotics are not given for irritable hip.

Watching your child: what are the warning signs to look out for?

If your child has **any** of the following, please return to the CED the same day:

- A temperature of more than 38°C.
- Becomes unwell.
- Refuses to put weight at all on the affected leg.
- Pain that gets worse or pain that doesn't stop even when resting.
- A red, hot or swollen joint.
- Bruising without an injury.
- Weakness, pins and needles or numbness in the legs.

These symptoms may mean there is a more serious problem such as a bone or joint infection which may need hospital treatment.