



AAP NEWS PARENT PLUS

INFORMATION FROM YOUR PEDIATRICIAN

Synovitis: A common culprit of childhood hip pain

Many young children experience hip pain. Your child's pediatrician can help determine whether the pain is cause for concern.

Your 5-year-old is limping, complains of pain on one side of his hip and is running a low-grade fever. These symptoms call for a visit to the doctor's office, but don't panic. The likeliest cause is a harmless, temporary condition called transient, or toxic, synovitis. Symptoms generally disappear without treatment within 10 days.

Transient synovitis occurs about four times more often in boys than girls and is most common in children between ages 3 and 7. The disease can't be diagnosed until more serious conditions are ruled out, such as septic arthritis, a bacterial infection of the joints.

The causes of transient synovitis are not known, but a diagnosis of the

condition appears to correlate with a viral infection or possibly trauma before your child feels hip pain, according to a recent article in *Pediatrics in Review*. Heavier children tend to be predisposed to the condition.

Pediatric experts offer the following information on diagnosing and treating transient synovitis:

- The most common symptoms of transient synovitis include hip pain on one side and a limp. A child with synovitis also may have knee pain, thigh pain and a fever of less than 101 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Because symptoms of transient synovitis are similar to those of

more serious conditions, it is important to visit your doctor if your child experiences unexplained hip pain or a limp.

- Treatment includes limiting weight-bearing activity. Your doctor also may recommend anti-inflammatory medications like ibuprofen to ease your child's discomfort. Antibiotics have no effect on the duration or severity of transient synovitis.
- Once your child has been diagnosed with transient synovitis, contact your doctor if your child's fever rises or if pain worsens or lasts longer than 10 days.

— Allison Bond

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