

What is an irritable hip?

Irritable Hip is inflammation (pain and swelling) of the hip joint which occurs in children under 10 years of age and typically between three and eight years. Your child may have had a 'cold' or a viral illness, one or two weeks before the hip becomes sore. Usually only one hip is affected. Over the next few days, it should get better, although sometimes the pain can last up to a week or more.

Children can have a low grade fever up to 38°C. If there has been no injury it is the most common cause of hip and/or knee pain in this age group. Children who have an irritable hip do not have long term problems with hip pain or arthritis.

Tests and Investigations

Some of the tests your child may have had are:

- Blood tests to look for signs of infection
- X-rays to exclude bony problems
- Occasionally an ultrasound scan may be performed to look for fluid in the joint.

If these have not shown any significant abnormality, most children can be managed at home.

You should:

- Give pain medicine regularly as prescribed while your child has pain.
- Encourage your child to drink plenty of fluid.
- Encourage your child to rest and limit their activity. Most children will do this themselves while they are sore.

Contact Children's Acute Assessment Unit if your child shows any of the following:

- Raised temperature above 38°C
- Redness and/or swelling anywhere on the affected leg.
- Increasing pain that cannot be controlled with the pain relief medicine that has been prescribed.
- Pain or swelling of any other joints.
- Becomes unwell, not eating etc.

You may be asked to bring your child back to be reviewed over the next few days or be followed up by telephone until they have recovered.

Information on your child's admission will be sent to your GP.

Have you changed GP's? Do we have your current GP recorded correctly?

If you do not have a regular GP, please talk to your nurse who can give you a list of GP's in your area.

If you have been discharged from the Children's Acute Assessment Unit, the staff will phone you the next day to check on your child's progress and answer any questions you may have.

If you are concerned over the next 24 hours, please contact us on 364 0428.

Continue to contact your GP for ongoing care of your child.

Children's health information website: www.kidshealth.org.nz

Christchurch Hospital website: www.cdhb.govt.nz

