

Children's Emergency Department (CHED)

Irritable Hip Discharge Information Leaflet

Your child has been seen in the Emergency Department and the clinician has assessed that your child may be safely treated at home.

This leaflet is to advise you about how to manage your child's illness and to help you decide where and when to get further advice or assessment if needed.

Limping in children

We see many children who have been brought to the Emergency Department because they have developed a limp or pain in the leg. Most of these children will have an "irritable hip" (see below) or another condition which does not need investigation to diagnose and will get better on its own without hospital treatment. There are some other more serious causes of a limp, such as joint or bone infection which do need hospital treatment. The treating clinician will have decided that there is no sign of infection by listening to what you have to say and examining your child.

What is an 'irritable hip'?

Irritable hip (or transient synovitis) is the commonest cause of limp in childhood. It is due to inflammation of the hip joint. This is when the lining of the hip joint is swollen. It is most often seen in younger children. There is not always a clear cause but it often happens after a viral illness or an injury. Your child may complain of pain in the hip, groin, thigh or knee and may have difficulty walking or crawling. Usually only one side is affected. It is generally a mild condition which gets better on its own after one or two weeks.

What can I do to help my child at home?

Give regular pain relief medicine such as paracetamol and/or ibuprofen (follow the instructions on the bottle). Most children will show some improvement over the next few days. If your child is unwell, not improved at all or is worse, then your child will need to be brought back to the Emergency Department for further assessment.

When can I expect my child to be back to normal?

You can allow your child to gradually go back to their usual activities as they improve, but we advise they do not do sport or strenuous activity for two weeks from the time that the limp was first noticed.

What should I look for in my child after being discharged back home?

Please bring them back to the Emergency Department immediately if your child:

- becomes unwell or develops a fever
- has increasing or worsening of pain despite pain relief
- is unable to put any weight at all on the affected leg
- has redness and swelling to any joint on the affected leg

You should also return to the Emergency Department if there are no signs of improvement after 5-7 days. If at that point things are slowly improving but not completely better, it is safe to continue giving pain relief and expecting a full recovery at about two weeks.

If your child is improving but not fully recovered after two weeks your GP may be able to advise or reassess.

We aim to provide the best care for every patient. So, we would like your feedback on the quality of the care you have received from the Hospital. Please visit <http://ratenhs.uk/IQu9vx> or scan QR code:

