

Hip Pain

Hip pain may be caused by any one or combination of four working parts. These are the bone itself, the fluid filled balloons called bursa that lubricate and pad the joint, the ligaments and capsule that hold the joint together, and the muscles that move the joint. Most hip problems such as fractures, dislocations or infections are treated by orthopedic surgeons. When the problem is not surgically fixable, or surgery has failed or is not an option, the pain specialist is helpful.

When you go to a doctor, be specific in telling him or her where your pain is. This helps the doctor narrow the possibilities of what could be wrong.

Groin and inside thigh pain

Pain in this area may be due to conditions outside the hip joint, like a hernia, infection of the lymph nodes, or blood clots and phlebitis in the groin area. Herpes simplex can cause nerve pain in this area. Inflammation of a fluid filled sack in the buttock area called *the iliopsoas bursa* can also cause pain in this area. Arthritis of the hip can be felt in the groin and inside of the thigh. Small stress fractures of the hip and pelvis can occur, and nerve damage to any of three nerves, the *saphenous, obturator or femoral nerve* can cause this pain. Muscle pulls of the adductor or iliopsoas muscle are a common cause of pain in this area, especially in athletes or associated with a slip or fall. Women can feel pain in this area from ovary or fallopian tube problems or both sexes from the ureter, as in kidney stones.

Pain in the outside of the thigh

Football players are familiar with the old term hip pointer, which is pain in the outside of the hip from a blow to the area. Inflammation of the fluid sack on the outside of the hip, known as the **trochanteric bursa** is common. Bursitis can be caused by many things, included repeated small trauma or arthritis. Even lying in bed for a prolonged period can cause it in an otherwise active person. It is usually worse at night, and you find it hard to lay on that side. Cortisone type injections can be very helpful.

In teens and young women, hip pain when you bend the leg and pull it toward the other leg can be caused by a thickening of a

tough fibrous part of the body known as the *iliotibial band*. Doctors often call pain from this band as **snapping hip syndrome**, because the leg sometimes feels as if it snaps with activity.

Meralgia paresthetica is a condition where the outside of the thigh is *both* numb and painful. It usually occurs in overweight people, and can be from wearing too tight clothing or belts over the front of the pelvis. It can also occur as a result of surgery or trauma to the hip. It is thought to be due a pinching or damage to the *lateral femoral cutaneous nerve*. It can be diagnosed and treated with a nerve block into this nerve at the top of the hip. Weight loss can also be beneficial, as well as medications.

Pain in the front of the thigh

Pain here may be due to a strain of the quadriceps or sartorius muscles. You can see these muscles if you look down at your thigh while standing up from a chair. If you tear a muscle, you can sometimes be see or feel a bruise over the area. Back problems like a herniated disc at the L2-4 areas can sometimes cause pain to be felt in the front of the leg. Lastly, damage to the femoral nerve in the groin can also cause pain in the front of the leg.

Generalized pelvic and thigh pain

Intermittent Claudication can cause pelvic, buttock or thigh pain with walking. One unique thing about this type of pain is that when the walking stops, the pain goes right away. The condition is from a narrowing of the arteries that bring blood to the legs. When you walk, your legs need more blood than can fit through the narrowed artery, and you feel pain. When you stop, the legs have enough blood, and the pain goes away. Exercise, special nerve blocks to increase the diameter of the blood vessels, medications to increase the size of the blood vessels and surgery are typical options. This problem can be associated with the onset of impotence, as again, blood supply cannot meet demand.

If you have pain, see a specialist at Newport Pain Management **949 759-8400**, www.newportpain.com . The extra-knowledge a specialist has can mean the difference between living in pain and living.