

Lateral Hip Pain

The aim of this leaflet is to give you some understanding of the problems you have with your lateral hip pain and to provide some advice on how to manage this. It is not a substitute for professional healthcare advice and should be used along with information you may be given by your GP or other health practitioner.

What is Lateral Hip Pain?

Lateral hip pain is a term used to describe pain on the outside of the hip. It is also known as trochanteric bursitis, greater trochanteric hip pain or syndrome etc.

The pain is thought to come from one or more of the structures on the outside of the hip.

Causes

- Inactive Lifestyle
- Postural habits e.g. crossing legs, standing postures.
- Weight gain/obesity
- Overtraining
- Reduced flexibility and/or strength of the muscles around the hip.

Symptoms

- Pain location can vary from the outer aspect of the hip and thigh, lower back or towards the knee.
- Pain is usually increased when lying on that side at night or when pressure is applied at the side of hip.
- Painful activities may include walking, standing, stairs, running etc.

Diagnosis

Diagnosis of this condition is based on a mixture of the signs, symptoms and clinical examination.

X-rays or scans are not usually indicated in this condition.

Treatment- Self Help

Avoid sleeping on the painful side, if possible. Try a mattress topper or duvet under the sheet to cushion your hip.

Try a pillow between your knees when lying on your side.

Improve the strength and flexibility of your muscles in the area (see exercises).

Adjust postural habits- avoid crossing your legs when sitting or standing with your hip swayed to one side. Pace or reduce intensity of aggravating activities, but remain active.

Maintain a healthy body weight.

Further Advice

Regular activity is important to help improve strength, flexibility and overall fitness, all of which can reduce your pain. Avoid being completely inactive; instead modify, pace or change the intensity of your chosen activity.

Medication

Many people use medication to help them remain active and to cope with their pain and symptoms. It is recommended that you take your medication regularly. It is best to get advice from a GP or pharmacist.

Ice

Application of ice or frozen peas can be helpful in reducing your symptoms. Never apply ice directly to the skin, always wrap it in a damp towel and apply to painful area for 10 minutes, checking skin regularly. Ice can be applied a couple of times a day.

Exercises

All exercises should be relatively comfortable to do. If you have pain on a specific exercise that does not settle quickly, you should stop that exercise.

Try 2-3 times per day.

Exercise 1

Lying on your back, with your knees bent. Keeping your knees together, lift your pelvis and hips as far as you can. Squeeze your buttocks and keep your hips level, hold for 5 seconds then slowly lower, 1-2 times per day.

Exercise 2

Clench your buttock cheeks together when sitting or standing. Alternate from buttock to buttock to both at the same time. Try 30 repetitions, 3-4 times per day.

Exercise 3

Stand with your feet hip distance apart. Hold on to something for balance, rather than support. Slowly bend your knees and imagine you are going to sit down in a chair behind you. Only go as far as you can control and then stand up, squeezing your bottom as you stand. Try 10 repetitions, 2-3 times per day.

Other Intervention

There are other health interventions which may be appropriate for your condition. These can be discussed with your health care practitioner. For some patients a corticosteroid injection can help reduce symptoms. Surgery is not usually indicated in this condition.

Investigations/do I need any special tests

The main way we diagnose your condition is through what you tell us and by examining your back, hip and knee. Other investigations may be considered, these can be discussed with your health care professional.

Work

It is usually recommended that you try to stay at work or get back to work as soon as possible. You do not need to be fully pain and symptom free to return to work. Research shows the longer you are off work the less likely it is that you return.

Try to stay positive. There is a lot you can do to help yourself. Most symptoms do settle with time.

Useful Information:

www.nhsinform.co.uk