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## **Limb Pain Syndromes**

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### **7. Transient Synovitis**

#### **7.1 What is it?**

Transient synovitis is a mild inflammation (small amount of fluid within the joint), of unknown cause, of the hip joint that resolves by itself leaving no damage.

#### **7.2 How common is it?**

It is the most common cause of hip pain in paediatrics. It affects 2 to 3% of children aged 3-10 years. It is more common in boys (one girl for every 3/4 boys).

#### **7.3 What are the main symptoms?**

The main symptoms are hip pain and a limp. Hip pain may be present as pain in the groin, upper thigh or occasionally in the knee, usually of sudden onset. The most common manifestation is a child awakening with a limp or refusing to walk.

#### **7.4 How is it diagnosed?**

The physical examination is characteristic: a limp with decreased and painful hip motion in an afebrile child older than 3 years of age, who otherwise does not appear ill. Both hips are affected in 5% of cases. Hip x-rays generally have normal findings and are not usually required. In contrast, hip ultrasound is very useful in detecting hip synovitis.

#### **7.5 How can we treat it?**

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The basis of the treatment is rest, which should be proportionate to the degree of pain. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs can help to decrease pain and inflammation. The condition usually resolves after an average of 6-8 days.

### **7.6 What is the prognosis?**

Prognosis is excellent with full recovery in 100% of children (it is transient by definition). If symptoms persist for more than 10 days, a different disease should be considered. It is not uncommon to develop new episodes of transient synovitis; these episodes are usually milder and shorter than the first one.