

Lateral Hip Pain (Outer side of hip)

Information and Exercise Leaflet for Patient's and Carers

Lateral hip pain is a condition where pain is felt on the outer side of the hip that may also travel down the outer side of your thigh. It can present suddenly through overuse or build up gradually over time, it usually settles within 6 weeks.

It is often worse when lying in bed at night on the affected side, or when walking/ standing for long periods. It is more common in women than in men.

Lateral hip pain can be due to degeneration or tearing to the tendons of some of the smaller hip muscles. The causes of the tendon damage are usually compression or over activity of the larger hip muscles on the underlying smaller ones.

The problem can usually be solved by strengthening the hip and thigh muscles alongside a core stability programme.

Should I be resting or moving?

For the first 24 to 48 hours

- Try to rest your hip but avoid long periods of not moving at all.
- Try to move your hip gently for 10 to 20 seconds every hour when you are awake.
- If swollen or warm then use a wet towel over your hip followed by an ice bag/frozen peas for 10-15 minutes every 2 hours.

After 48 hours

- You should try to use your hip more.
- Do whatever you normally would and stay at or return to work. This is important and is the best way to get better.
- Avoid sports or heavy lifting until you are pain free and have good movement.
- When going upstairs reduce the strain on your hip by leading with your good leg. If there is a handrail, use it.
- When going downstairs reduce the strain on your hip by leading with your problem leg. If there is a handrail, use it.
- Gentle exercise helps your hip and can relieve pain.

Should I take painkillers?

Painkillers can help you keep moving

However, it is important to discuss this with your GP, especially if you are taking any other medication

Should I use ice or a heat pad?

If you have had an injury or a flare-up of an old problem in the last two days, wrap crushed ice in a damp towel and hold it for five to ten minutes against the part of your hip that hurts.

You can do this every two to three hours. Make sure you use a damp towel between the ice and the skin to avoid ice burn.

Alternatively, you could try sports sprays and gel packs, which do a similar job.

After two days, you may find that heat is more relaxing.

You could use a heat pad or a hot water bottle with an insulated cover on it. Make sure this is not too hot and not directly touching your skin. You should use this for 10 to 15 minutes, three to four times a day.

You can also continue with ice to help reduce the pain and further swelling.

What about work?

You will recover faster if you can stay at or get back to work as early as possible. Do not worry if your hip still hurts, as you may only have to do light work at first. Try to stay active and remember to keep moving. Speak to your manager about any concerns you may have.

What about sports?

You should take time before you take part in any sports after a hip problem. If you take part in sports too soon you could be injured again. You should have no swelling and be able to move your hip properly. You should have full or close to full strength and be able to take your weight through your leg without limping. Remember to stretch and warm up fully before sports.

Warning Signs

The following symptoms are very rare, but if you suddenly develop any of them, you should consult your doctor straightaway.

- Back pain, referred leg pain with or without pins & needles, hot or burning pain. (Attend GP / Spinal drop in clinic)
- Significant swelling to the leg not just the hip
- Feeling generally unwell such as signs of infection for example night sweats that are out of the ordinary, high temperature and feeling unwell
- Difficulty passing or controlling urine
- Numbness, pins and needles, or weakness in both legs
- Numbness around your back passage or genitals
- Unsteadiness on your feet
- Testicular pain or swelling
- Constant night pain (unable to rest/sleep)
- Unexplained weight loss
- Unable to put any weight through your leg
- A lump in your groin region
- Pain that gets worse and worse
- Under the age of 16 you should consult your doctor

Helpful tips during a flare up.

- Avoid sitting with your legs crossed
- Avoid sitting with your knees wide apart, your thighs should be parallel
- Avoid low or saggy chairs
- When standing, don't stand with you hip pushed to one side
- When lying in bed try to sleep on your back with a pillow under your knees or on your side with a pillow in-between you knees to keep you thighs parallel
- If you run, try to run on flat ground and avoid surfaces with a camber (sideways slope)
- If you work at a desk, get up and move around every 30 minutes or so

Lateral Hip Exercises

Exercise 1 - In supine

- Neutral spinal and hip alignment
- Bend your ankles up
- And push your knees down firmly against the bed whilst squeezing your buttocks.
- **Hold for 5-10 seconds**
- **Repeat 5 times**



Exercise 2 – In supine

- Lying with your affected leg against the wall
- Keeping your toes pointing to the ceiling
- Push out against the wall
- **Hold for 5-10 seconds**
- **Repeat 5 times**



Exercise 3 - In standing

- With your affected leg against the wall
- Keeping your toes pointing forward
- Push outwards against the wall
- **Hold 5- 10 seconds**
- **Repeat 5 times**



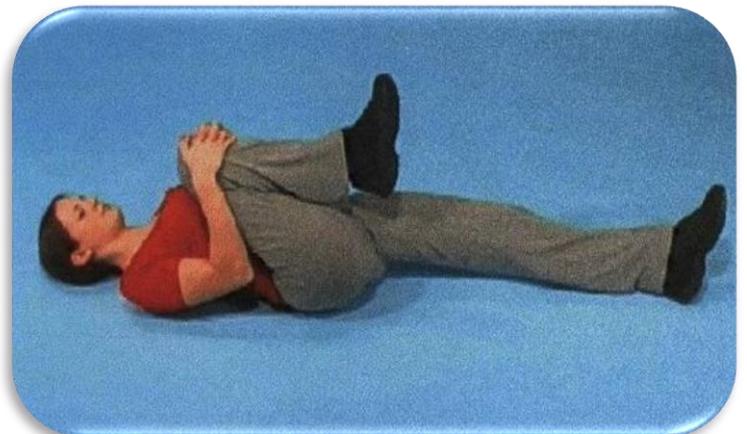
Exercise 4 - In Supine

- **Activate your core**
- Slowly lift your bottom up off the floor, keeping your back straight
- Slowly lower back to the start position
- **Repeat 5 times**
- **Hold for 10 -15 seconds**



Exercise 5 – In supine

- Bend the leg stretched towards your chest and hold onto the knee with both arms
- Pull your knee towards you chin keeping your head on the floor
- You should feel stretching on the back of your thigh and buttock
- **Repeat 5 times**
- **Hold for 10 – 15 Seconds**



If your symptoms fail to improve within 6 weeks with this regime you should contact physiotherapy for an assessment.

If this is the case remember to bring a pair of shorts to change in to.

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