

“My Child is Limping”

Toxic Synovitis

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A Limp in a child is very concerning, especially when nothing is sprained or broken.

Normal healthy children can wake up one day and stop walking and or walk with pain and a limp.

Toxic Synovitis is inflammation and fluid around a joint (i.e., hip, knee, and ankle). This condition is also known as Transient Synovitis because it only lasts for a short while. Often, only one side is affected. Toxic Synovitis usually occurs in children 3-6 years of age but may occur in children younger than 3. It is more common in boys than in girls. The cause of Toxic Synovitis is unknown.

Your child may have a current history of an infection or virus that may relate to the synovitis. No matter what the cause, the good news is almost all children recover within 2 weeks and without long-lasting effects.

The main symptom of Toxic Synovitis is pain. In some children the joint pain gets worse very quickly, in others, slowly. If your child has Toxic Synovitis he or she will have pain when the joint is moved. Your child may walk with a limp or stop walking completely.

The first step is to diagnose synovitis. Tests, which help the doctor establish the correct diagnosis, include: x-ray, blood tests, ultrasound, or MRI. If the tests show fluid in a joint, it may be necessary for your doctor to insert a needle in the joint to collect fluid. This is to make sure there is no infection. If your doctor feels the fluid collection is necessary your child will be taken to the operating room for the procedure.

Treatment for Toxic Synovitis includes rest and a regimen of Motrin three times a day for two weeks. Often your child should get better in a week. Remember it is important to give the full two weeks of Motrin to prevent recurrence. Your child can resume regular activities when he/she is feeling better. It is important to call your doctor if your child continues to run a fever of 101 or greater and/or will not walk after 2-3 days of being seen.



Dosage: _____

every 8 hours (three times/day)
for 10-14 days

Dr. Locke's clinical care team

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