

Hip Pain

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What Is Hip Pain?

Hip pain is discomfort felt in or around the hip joint. The hip is a ball-and-socket joint that connects your thigh bone (femur) to your pelvis. It helps support your body weight and allows you to walk, run, bend, and move comfortably.

Common Symptoms

Hip pain may feel:

- Sharp, dull, aching, stabbing, or burning
- Located in the groin, side of the hip, buttock, thigh, or even the knee
- Worse with walking, standing, climbing stairs, sitting, or exercise
- Associated with stiffness, weakness, clicking, catching, or a feeling that the hip is "locking"

Common Causes

Hip pain can come from many different structures, including muscles, tendons, ligaments, cartilage, joints, or nearby nerves.

Common causes include:

- Muscle or tendon strains
- Tendinitis or bursitis
- Arthritis (wear-and-tear of the joint)
- Labral tears (damage to cartilage inside the hip)
- Femoroacetabular impingement (FAI)
- Referred pain from the low back or sacroiliac (SI) joint

How Is Hip Pain Diagnosed?

Your healthcare provider will perform a thorough history and physical examination to determine the source of your symptoms.

Additional testing may include:

- **X-rays** to evaluate bones and arthritis
- **MRI scans** to assess cartilage, tendons, ligaments, or other soft tissues

Treatment Options

Many cases of hip pain improve with conservative care.

Conservative Treatment

- Activity modification
- Therapeutic exercises and stretching
- Strengthening of the hip and core muscles
- Manual therapy and joint mobilization
- Soft tissue treatment
- Home exercise programs

Medical Treatment

Depending on the diagnosis, treatment may also include:

- Anti-inflammatory medications (NSAIDs)
- Corticosteroid injections
- Orthopedic consultation
- Surgery for severe or persistent conditions

What Is the Outlook?

Recovery depends on the cause of the hip pain.

- Muscle strains, tendinitis, and many soft tissue conditions often respond well to conservative treatment.
- Arthritis and other degenerative conditions may gradually progress over time.
- Early diagnosis and appropriate treatment often lead to better outcomes and improved function.

Typical Treatment Schedule

Many patients are seen:

- **2–3 visits per week for 2–3 weeks**
- Progress is then reassessed and treatment is adjusted as needed

Performing recommended home exercises and staying active are important for long-term improvement and reducing the risk of future problems.

Seek Immediate Medical Attention If You Experience:

- Inability to bear weight on the leg
- Severe pain after a fall or injury
- Sudden swelling, redness, or warmth around the hip
- Fever with hip pain
- Loss of bowel or bladder control
- Significant weakness or numbness in the leg