

Inflammatory Arthritis of the Hip

Arthritis means an inflammation of the joint. Depending on the form of arthritis, such as that of osteoarthritis, the inflammation arises because of the smooth covering along the bone ends wearing out. Other forms of arthritis, such as that of rheumatoid arthritis, the lining of the joint will become inflamed as part of the disease.

Rheumatoid arthritis is a disease of the autoimmune system affecting multiple joints along both sides of the body simultaneously. Ankylosing spondylitis is a chronic inflammation of the sacroiliac joint and the spine that causes inflammation in the surrounding joints. Systemic lupus erythematosus is an autoimmune disease where the body ends up harming its own healthy tissues and cells.

One common inflammatory condition is called polymyalgia rheumatica (PMR). PMR literally means “Multiple joint and muscle pain”, and as the name suggests affects several joints in the body. The hips are one of the most commonly affected areas, along with the shoulders, and pain typically affects both sides. PMR occurs mostly in older people, over 60s, and is more common in females.

Generally inflammatory arthritis is diagnosed by a blood test, and markers in the blood called ESR and CRP can be an indication of a problem.

Sufferers will typically notice hip pain in the groin, spreading to the buttock, and possibly an aching down the front of the thigh. They will also notice pain when getting up out of bed, and when trying to put shoes and socks on.

Inflammatory Arthritis of the Hip Anatomy

The unique anatomy of the hip allows it to be both strong and flexible, which allows it to bear weight and provide an extensive range of movement. The hip is located at the spot of the femur head and where it fits into the rounded socket within the pelvis. This particular construction provides you with three ranges of flexibility:

- Hip extension and flexion – the ability to move the leg in a forward and backward motion
- Hip adduction and abduction – the ability to move the leg to the side in and outward and inward motion
- Rotation – the ability to point the toes outward or inward and then move the straight leg into the direction of the toes

How to Treat Inflammatory Arthritis of the Hip:

1. Anti-Inflammatory Medication

An anti-inflammatory medication will work to reduce any pain and inflammation in the joint.

2. Steroids

This powerful anti-inflammatory can be taken by mouth, as an injection or by applying cream to the skin. It can be one of the most effective ways to reduce inflammation.

3. Sulfasalazine and Methotrexate

These medications are prescribed to help delay the progression of the disease. Some of the newer drugs tend to work against the condition and have a positive effect on arthritis.

4. Physical Therapy

Physical therapy helps to increase range of movement, while strengthening exercises work to maintain muscle tone. Swimming is ideal for those who are suffering with PMR.



5. Assistive Devices

A walking stick, crutch, long shoehorn, walker or reach might make it easier for you to be able to handle all of your regular daily activities.

6. Surgery

If all of the aforementioned treatments don't work, you might have to go through surgery. The type of surgery needed depends on numerous factors, such as the hip joint condition, your age, the type of arthritis you have and how the disease is progressing. The options will be discussed with you to make an informed decision. Surgery is rarely performed however as the pain felt from inflammation can be transient and affect multiple areas.

7. Nutrition

Typically over-looked, nutrition can play a vital part in all this. Some foods can increase the inflammation in your body. This is more common in people with allergies and intolerances, for example gluten intolerant or dairy intolerant people may find these foods cause inflammation. Although outside the scope of this article, discuss options with your therapist and decide if you should see a nutritionist, or do your own research on Google.

Tips:

- Certain forms of arthritis run in families, so you might be more likely to develop the condition if your siblings or parents have the disease.
- As you grow older, the likelihood of getting arthritis increases.
- Women tend to be more likely to get the condition than that of men.
- If you have previously suffered from a joint injury, you are more likely to develop arthritis in that specific joint.
- Carrying additional weight tends to add stress to the joints, especially in the knees, spine and hips.