

## Hip Bursitis

Bursitis is a very common problem throughout many areas in the body. A bursa is normally a thin, fluid-containing sac found virtually anywhere there is friction between body tissues or between the body and the external environment. Excessive friction or injury can cause the swelling and irritation known as bursitis.

A common area for bursitis is on the outside of the hip. Here, a large tendon called the iliotibial band (ITB) passes over a structure called the greater trochanter, a bony bump on the outside of the femur (thigh bone). The tendon may rub against the bone causing friction to build in the bursa during periods of walking, jogging, biking, or running. This may be heightened with a tight iliotibial band (ITB), unequal leg length, running on banked (slanted) surfaces, or weakness of the large muscle groups of the leg.

The main symptom of hip bursitis is pain on the outside of the leg, which may radiate down the thigh. This may often be confused with sciatica, pain down the back of the thigh often originating from the sciatic nerve or lumbar spine. As the problem progresses, the symptoms may include a limp when walking, stiffness in the hip joint, and/or persistent pain at rest or while sleeping.

Because hip bursitis may mimic other more serious medical conditions, a physician should evaluate this disorder. X-rays will usually not show hip bursitis but may rule out other problems. Anti-inflammatory medications may also be prescribed or recommended.

Hip bursitis is often treated successfully without surgery. Activity modification, stretching, strengthening, and other conservative anti-inflammatory treatments will generally resolve symptoms. Runners or athletes may benefit from a biomechanical analysis to determine any other contributing factors.

In more chronic or severe cases, steroid injections into the bursa may ease symptoms and give temporary relief. The injections generally do not cure the problem but may control the symptoms for months and/or assist rehabilitation efforts.

The above is intended as general information only. Be sure to contact your physician for advice on your own specific medical problems.