

How to Care for Your Child with a Limp



What is limping?

Limping is walking in uneven or unsteady way.

What are the causes of limping in children?

Most cases of limp are caused by self-limiting not serious conditions that will go away without treatment. There are other causes for a child to limp such as injuries, viral illnesses or infections.

What are the symptoms of limping in children?

A child with a limp may experience:

- Pain
- Weakness
- Deformity- changes in the shape of hip , leg , or foot
- In toddlers and young children, they may just refuse to walk or stand

How is limping in children diagnosed?

The doctor will ask few questions about your child health and examine your child. If needed the doctor may ask for x-rays or blood tests. These tests are to ensure that there is no serious cause.

How is it treated?

Most cases of a limp are caused by self-limiting not serious conditions that would go away by itself.

Sometimes it is not easy to find the cause of the limp during the first visit to the emergency department.

The doctor will give you an advice on future follow up and further tests if needed.

If your doctor advises to give medicine for pain, you can give:

- Paracetamol (any brand).
- Ibuprofen (any brand).
- Follow the instruction on the medicine package for the correct dose for your child.
- Do not give Aspirin to your child as this can cause serious complication.

Home care advice

- Ensure your child takes appropriate rest at home.
- Give pain medicine as directed by your doctor.
- Bring your child to any follow up appointment as directed by your doctor.

When should I seek medical advice?

Seek medical care if your child:

- Has Fever.
- Has swelling, redness on his/her hip, leg, or foot.
- Has worsening pain.

Go to the Emergency Department if your child:

- Has Deformity- changes in the shape of hip, leg, or foot.
- Is very weak to stand.
- Loss of feeling on his legs.