

Understanding Apophysitis of the Pelvis/Hip

What is Apophysitis of the pelvis/hip?

An apophysis is a growth plate that provides a point for a muscle to attach to the bone. Growth plates are made up of cartilage that is softer and more vulnerable to injury than mature bone. When the muscle attached to the apophysis is excessively tight or overused, it can put increased tension and stress on the apophysis, which results in irritation and inflammation. This is called apophysitis. There are several apophyses at the hip and pelvis that can be affected. Pelvic/hip apophysitis most commonly affects adolescents between 12 and 18 years of age.

How does it occur?

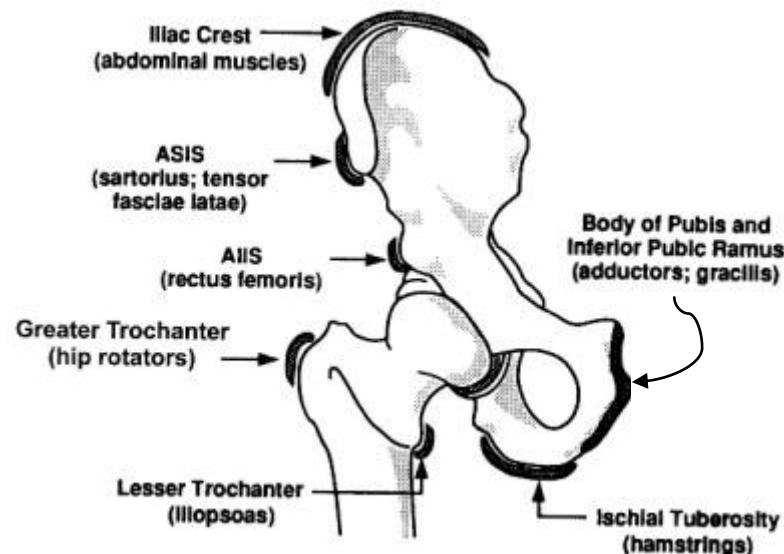
Apophysitis is an overuse injury that typically occurs after repetitive activities of the muscles attached to the apophysis. Apophysitis of the pelvis/hip usually affects runners, sprinters, dancers, soccer players and ice hockey players. Adolescent athletes with excessively tight hip and thigh muscles are also prone to pelvis/hip apophysitis. The apophyses most commonly affected are the anterior superior iliac spine (ASIS), the anterior inferior iliac spine (AIIS), the ischial tuberosity and the iliac crest. The muscles that attach to these apophyses flex and extend the hip and rotate and twist the pelvis and trunk.

Symptoms

- Dull pain in the groin that worsens with activity.
- Dull pain in the front, back, or side of your hip that worsens with activity.
- Tenderness over the injury site.

Apophysitis may be mistaken for a muscle strain.

Your doctor will review your symptoms and examine the injured area. Your doctor may order additional imaging such as an x-ray to determine whether there has been widening, irregularity or fracture of the apophysis.



Treatment Options

Your doctor will recommend rest from irritating activities until the pain and tenderness go away. Anti-inflammatories such as ibuprofen or Aleve will also help with healing and pain. It may take as long as 2-3 months for the pain to resolve and for the apophysis to heal. Once you are pain free with daily activities and the x-rays look normal, a gradual return to activities is recommended. Stretching and gentle strengthening the muscles that attach to the affected apophysis (hip and abdominal muscles) will also help with healing.

When can I return to my sport or activity?

The goal is to return you to your sport or activity as quickly and safely as possible. If you return to activities too soon or play with pain, the injury may worsen or return. This could lead to chronic pain and difficulty with sports.

Everyone recovers from injury at a different rate. In general, the longer you have symptoms before starting treatment the longer it will take to get better. Sometimes it can take up to 3 months for complete healing.

Safe return to sport occurs when full range of motion and strength have returned and radiographs show complete healing of the apophysis.

Do you have Apophysitis of the pelvis/hip?

Can apophysitis of the pelvis/hip be prevented?

Perform a proper warm-up before starting any activity. Stretching tight muscle groups. Do not play through pain. Pain is a sign of injury, stress, or overuse.

Rest is required to allow time for the injured area to heal. If pain does not resolve after a couple days of rest, consult your physician.



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Jeffrey B. Neustadt, M.D.
Gregory V. Hahn, M.D.
Drew E. Warnick, M.D.
Paul L. Benfanti, M.D.
Lee G. Phillips, M.D.
Daniel C. Bland, M.D.
T. Cooper Wilson, M.D.



625 6th Avenue South, Suite 450
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
Phone: (727) 898-2663 - Fax: (727) 568-6836

3440 W. Dr. MLK Jr. Blvd, Suite 200
Tampa, FL 33607
Phone: (813) 879-2663 - Fax: (813) 872-0286

5881 Rand Blvd - Sarasota, FL 34238

4443 Rowan Road - New Port Richey, FL 34653

3850 Tampa Road - Palm Harbor, FL 34684

885 South Parsons Avenue - Brandon, FL 33511

www.chortho.com



Children's Orthopaedic
and Scoliosis Surgery Associates, LLP

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