

# Lateral Hip Pain

Physiotherapy & Occupational Therapy

## Who is this leaflet for?

This leaflet is for patients who are suffering from a condition known as lateral hip pain.

## What will this leaflet tell me?

This leaflet will explain:

- What lateral hip pain is
- What causes it
- What the symptoms are
- Who it affects
- What you can do to help yourself
- What to do if you have any queries

## What is lateral hip pain?

This is a condition that presents as pain on the outer side of the thigh and which can radiate down towards the knee. It is sometimes referred to as greater trochanteric pain syndrome (GTPS), (the greater trochanter being the bony prominence on the outside of the hip) or bursitis (inflammation of the bursa or fluid filled sac near the hip joint). But research has identified that the bursitis may not be the sole cause of pain, and in most cases the pain is not due to inflammation but due to irritation of the gluteal muscle tendons that lie over the bony prominence of the hip.



## What causes Lateral Hip Pain?

A tendon is a soft tissue that attaches a muscle to a bone. Tendon health depends on activity and either too much or too little activity can be problematic. In a sporty person that's over trained or an individual that's inactive and de-conditioned the tendon can weaken.

Eventually pain is experienced, especially when the weakened tendon is challenged for example, increasing training loads, taking up walking after a period of inactivity particularly up hills and stairs, or with a fall directly landing on the side of the hip.

A gradual increase in weight, or a reduction in fitness overtime may also be a factor.

**The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.**

- Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111
- Keep the environment clean and tidy
- Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.

## What are the symptoms?

Common symptoms are pain and tenderness around the outside of your hip, particularly when:

- Standing, especially on one leg for example, when dressing
- Sitting with legs crossed or feet tucked underneath you
- Walking upstairs or hills
- Sleeping on affected side
- Getting in and out of bath or car

## Who does it affect?

It is more common from middle age onwards and tends to affect women more frequently than men. It is often seen together with other conditions such as low back pain, osteoarthritis of the hip and knee, rheumatoid arthritis and fibromyalgia.

## What can you do to help yourself?

Rest does not cure tendon issues, but exercising that may cause pain is also not helpful, so keeping up a walking programme that does not aggravate your pain will be worthwhile. Walk on the flat, avoid hills and keep stairs to a minimum until your pain settles. Start with 10 minutes of walking, and as your pain improves gradually increase your activity levels. A walking stick or pole can be beneficial.

If you are overweight, losing weight will help

**Sitting:** avoid crossing your legs. Instead try to keep your hips, knees and feet in line. Your knees need to be lower than your hips, you can use a wedge cushion to help with this. If your feet don't reach the floor, try using a footstool so that you aren't on the edge of your seat.

If you work at a desk, try and get up and move around every 30 minutes or so.

**Sitting to standing:** try not to let your knees drift together when standing or sitting down. Remember to always keep your hips, knees and feet aligned, and avoid pushing your hip to one side.

**Stairs:** Use the handrail and take your time.

**Standing:** ensure your weight is equally distributed with your feet hip width apart. Use a stick or worktop to support you, or try a perching stool. If you have to carry a baby, make sure this is on your front, not on your hip.

**Sleeping:** lie on your non painful side and rest your top leg on a pillow, or two alongside your body to keep your thighs parallel. Using a mattress topper can help ease the pressure when lying on the painful side.

Hot or cold packs can be useful. Use frozen peas wrapped in a damp tea towel or a covered hot water bottle for up to 15 minutes. Make sure to regularly check your skin to avoid ice or heat burn.

**Medication:** painkillers can help reduce your pain and therefore keep you moving. It is important to discuss this with your GP or Pharmacist, especially if you are taking any other medication.

**Exercise:** be positive and keep moving! If your symptoms persist following this advice, specific hip strengthening exercises may help and your physiotherapist can advise you on this. You can start by trying these exercises:

## Exercise 1:

Standing with feet a little wider than hip width apart. Keep your feet still on the ground but imagine you are trying to slide your legs apart. The deep muscles in your hips will tense but there will be no “actual” movement of your legs. This needs to be a static exercise.

You may find this easier to do standing with your back against a wall.



Alternatively:

Lie on your back with an exercise band placed around your legs (just below or above your knee). Feet hip-width apart and slack taken off the band.

Using your buttock muscles, try to slide your legs out to the sides against the resistance from the band. Hold the tension and then relax.

Note: Use a band that is firm enough so that minimal movement occurs when pulling your legs outwards.

Hold for 5-15 seconds, 3-5 reps, twice a day

## Exercise 2:



Lie on your back as shown with a pillow under your head. Gently pull in your tummy muscles, squeeze your buttocks and press heels into the bed (ankles / toes stay relaxed) Slowly lift your pelvis / bottom from the bed, this may be just taking the pressure off your buttocks initially.

There should be no discomfort in the lower back. Ensure you focus on your bottom muscles, don't let the hamstrings take over.

If you do get cramping in your hamstrings your bottom muscles are not working hard enough.

Slowly lift your hips / bottom 3-4 seconds up 3-4 seconds down. Bottom muscles working all the way.

Repeat 10 times , twice a day.

## What should I do if I have any queries?

If you have any concerns, please contact your physiotherapist

**For Cannock Chase Hospital:**

Physiotherapy Department,  
Cannock Chase Hospital  
Tel : 01543 576938

**For New Cross Hospital:**

Physiotherapy Department,  
New Cross Hospital  
Tel : 01902 695666

Hours available: 08.00-16.30

## English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

## Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

## Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

## Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

## Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

## Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。