Orthopaedic Connection

Jeopardy, A Snapping Hip

By Thomas J. Haverbush, M.D.
Orthopaedic Surgeon

Transforming patient information into patient understanding.

Orthopaedic Jeopardy
A condition known medically as Iliotibial Band Syndrome.

What is _________ a snapping hip?

It is the kind of problem that if you get it you will know you have it. You won’t have to wonder.
Do you feel a snapping or popping on the outer side of your hip when you walk or rotate your hip? The
condition is aptly named. So you can call it Snapping Hip not the other name. You don’t want friends leaving
you because you are getting too snooty.

Cause
It actually comes from around the hip, not in the actual hip joint. We have this big tendon band that
goes from the outside of the knee up to the side of the pelvis.
It passes over the bony prominence of the upper thigh bone. If this area is working normally, you don’t
even know you have a bursa sac there. If the bursa gets inflamed friction builds up and the tendon pops over
the bone which is painful and annoying.

Symptoms
The snapping sensation may be felt when the hip extends from a bent position as when you get up from
sitting in a chair. Some people even feel it when they are lying with the affected side up and happen to move
the leg. Then – snap! Ouch!
It is a sort of a cousin of hip bursitis.
Everyone with hip bursitis does not have a snapping hip.

Who Gets It
Snapping hip has been seen in all age groups from teenage to old age.

When To Call For Help
• If it becomes more than bothersome
• If it is painful
• If your hip seems to become weak
• If the condition actually causes you to fall

How I Treat It
• Reassurance if it’s not too bothersome. It is not arthritis.
• At first Advil or similar for inflammation
• Stretching exercises may help that are taught by a physical therapist.
• Heat then ice one or two times per day for a few weeks
• Injection of steroid medication
• Avoid activities you think may have caused it
• Very rarely, surgery to release the band

What Else?
A rare condition known as labral tear deep in the hip joint could mimic it. True arthritis of the hip could also mimic it, but it can be seen on plain x-rays that are always taken.

My patients put their trust in me and what I do improves the quality of their lives.

Office Website and Gratiot County Herald Archive
You will be amazed at all the helpful information it contains.
All of the information pertains to everything I treat in the office and hospital.
Be well. Good health, good life, all the best to you.
315 Warwick Drive
Alma, Michigan 48801
Phone 989-463-6092 for an appointment.

Dr. Haverbush