A Serious Hip Problem In Children

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

Transforming patient information into patient understanding.

Please everyone pay close attention to this. This hip problem in youngsters is devastating if not diagnosed and treated early.

What is “Epiphysis”?
In this case it refers to the growth plate or area of growing cells at the top of the thigh bone that is the hip. It is just below the ball part of the hip. This area controls how the top part of the thighbone and hip grow.

What slips?
The ball part of the hip begins to slowly “slip” or move from its usual position on top of the femoral neck at the growth plate.

Who gets this?
- Children age 10 – 18
- African-American boys particularly
- Children with excess weight
- Very athletic children
- 30% of children with a slip also get it on the other side

Cause
After all these years we still are not sure what happens to the growth plate to cause it to slip. It remains a mystery. There are several theories that it is unnecessary to go into.

Symptoms
- Pain in the child’s thigh or knee
- They rarely complain of hip pain
- Limping
- Foot turns outward when walking
- Symptoms can build up slowly over time or can come on suddenly
- Affected leg may seem shorter

If not treated early
- Deformed hip
- Very high chance of arthritis at early age
- Stiffness in hip
- Can’t run
- Shorter leg

Warning
Any child complaining of pain in the thigh, knee or hip can indicate this serious condition. Don’t delay. They must be seen. Call me. Call somebody. Please. It’s not a “sprain or pulled muscle”.

Treatment

- Earliest possible treatment is the key
- Surgery to place metal pins in the bone to stop the “slip”
- The pins allow the growth plate to fuse and become stable
- The pain stops
- Patients remain on crutches for at least several weeks

We realize that some kids have more complaints than others. Better to have it checked early than to risk a lifetime of pain, limping and possible arthritis. **If you miss it as a parent, you will never forgive yourself.**

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

Office Website and Gratiot County Herald Archive

Thank you loyal readers for joining us each week. Do yourself a favor and log onto [www.orthopodsurgeon.com](http://www.orthopodsurgeon.com).

It contains a world of musculoskeletal information you and your family and friends can use! Website, Your Orthopaedic Connection, Archive of all previous GCH articles.

Please check it out. 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