

HIP PAIN AND PREVENTION

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Hip pain often limits physical activities such as walking, running, squatting, and going up and down stairs. It can also create problems with sleeping and sitting positions.

Depending on what the source of the hip pain is, **symptoms can be felt in a number of different regions which may include:** the low back, deep in the hip joint, on the outer aspect of the hip, in the groin, at the front of the thigh, and in the buttocks. Listed below are some of the conditions that commonly cause hip pain:



- **Osteoarthritis** results from the protective layers of cartilage in the hip becoming worn over a period of time, leading to change in the composition of the bone underneath the cartilage.
- **Osteoporosis** is a disease of bones that decreases bone mass and strength, making them more fragile and susceptible to fracture. Hip fractures usually occur in older individuals after a fall injury.
- **Ligaments** are tough bands of fibrous tissue that connect one bone to another. They help stabilize joints, preventing excessive movement. **Ligament injuries (sprains)** can occur when these structures become over-stretched or torn, often during activities where there is a direct blow to the hip or there is an awkward fall or twisting motion involving the hip.
- **Tendons** are strong tissues that anchor **muscles** to bones, and these structures can become over-stretched or inflamed around the hip joint leading to **tendonitis** and **muscular strains**.
- **Bursitis** can involve several fluid-filled structures in your hip that help provide more cushioning in the joint. Repetitive hip strain and blunt trauma to the hip bursa are two common causes of **bursitis**.
- **Injuries and conditions in the low back can radiate symptoms into the hip region.** This includes things such as osteoarthritis, sprains and strains, disc herniations, sciatica, and spinal stenosis.

Below are some useful tips that can help individuals avoid or minimize the chance of hip pain and injury:

1. **Maintain a healthy bodyweight** to decrease the overall stress on your hips.
2. **Wear appropriate footwear** that supports your activities and helps maintain proper leg alignment and balance.
3. **Prepare your hips for physical activity** by stimulating the joints and muscles, and increasing circulation. This can be accomplished with a quick cardiovascular warm-up and gentle stretching of the muscles in the hips, thighs and lower legs.
4. **Choose activities that are "hip friendly" for you.** This may include low impact activities such as swimming, walking or cycling. Remember to start slowly and build up the intensity gradually.
5. **Strength, balance, flexibility, and core** exercises can train your body to better support your hips and avoid injuries.



If you have hip pain that limits your daily functioning, you should contact a licensed health professional who deals in the diagnosis and treatment of hip pain. For additional information on hip pain and treatment of muscle and joint injuries, visit www.nhwc.ca.

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