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New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM)

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APPROACH TO PATIENT • Updated 29 Aug 2023
Hip Pain in Adults – Approach to the Patient

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Description

- Hip pain primarily results from intra-articular or extra-articular hip conditions. However, pain may also be referred from non-hip-related conditions.^{1,2,3}
- Outerbridge classification for damage to articular cartilage:
 - Grade 0: normal cartilage
 - Grade 1: swelling and softening of cartilage lesions
 - Grade 2: partial-thickness chondral defect with surface fissures not reaching subchondral bone or exceeding 0.5 inches in diameter
 - Grade 3: fissuring of cartilage to subchondral bone, with diameter > 0.5 inches
 - Grade 4: erosion of cartilage with exposed subchondral bone
- References: *Clin Orth Relat Res* 2018 Oct;476(10):2101
- Tonnis grading scale for hip osteoarthritis:
 - Grade 0: none
 - Grade 1: slight narrowing of joint space with slight lipping at joint margin, slight sclerosis of femoral head or acetabulum
 - Grade 2: small cysts in femoral head or acetabulum with increased narrowing of joint space, moderate loss of sphericity of femoral head
 - Grade 3: large cysts in femoral head or acetabulum with severe joint space narrowing, severe deformity of femoral head, and avascular necrosis
 - Reference: *J Bone Joint Surg Am* 1999 Dec;81(12):1747

Incidence/Prevalence

- The reported prevalence of hip pain in adults > 60 years old is 11.9%–14% (*Osteoarthritis Cartilage* 2008 Sep;16(9):1039; *Fam Pract* 2002 Apr;51(4):271).

Background Information

Images

All (22)



Hip joint

Background Information

Videos

All (1)



Clinical examination of the hip

Background Information

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Hip Fracture

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VIDEO 1 OF 1



Featured Video

Approach to Hip Pain in Adults

Explore a structured clinical approach to evaluating hip pain in adult patients—covering differential diagnosis, physical exam maneuvers, and key decision points.

Clinical examination of the hip

Performing a physical examination of the hip.

View In Context: [Hip Pain in Adults - Approach to the Patient](#); [Osteonecrosis of the Hip in Adults](#)

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