

## Hydrotherapy

If needed, your child might do exercises in the hydrotherapy pool. The water supports the hip and helps strengthen muscles. The warm water can also reduce pain and stiffness.

## Long Term Outcome

Children who are younger when they get Perthes usually recover better because their hip has more time to heal. Most children can return to normal activities within a few years. Some children might still feel pain or stiffness, especially if the top of the thigh bone (femoral head) stays misshapen. Sometimes, surgery is needed. It is very important to follow the advice from doctors and physiotherapists in the early stages for the best recovery.

## Contact details:



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The Royal Bournemouth Hospital,  
Castle Lane East, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH7 7DW

Poole Hospital,  
Longfleet Road, Poole, Dorset, BH15 2JB

Christchurch Hospital,  
Fairmile Road, Christchurch, Dorset, BH23 2JX

Author: **Tori McGregor** and **Holly Barter** Date: **April 2025** Version: **One**  
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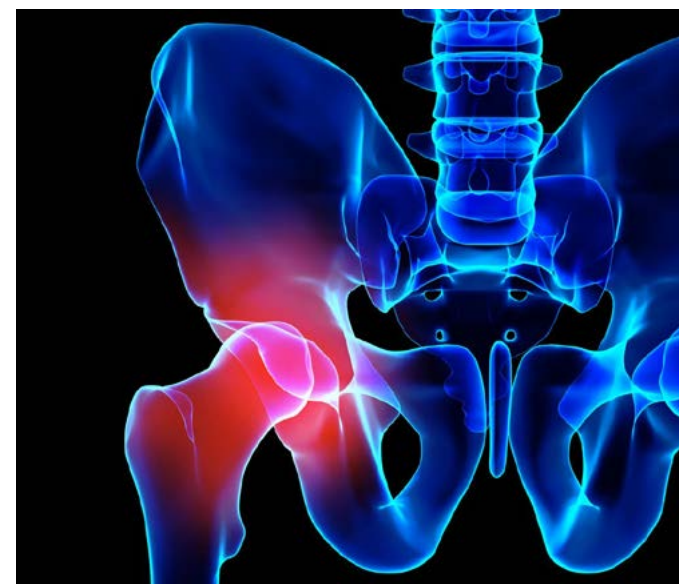
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Information for parents and children about

# Perthes

(Legg-Calve-Perthes Disease)



Acute Paediatric Physiotherapy Department

✕: @childphysiopgh f: childrensphysiopoole i: @childrensphysiopgh



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## What is Perthes?

Perthes is a rare condition where the blood flow to the top of the thigh bone stops, causing the bone to soften and lose shape. It can lead to hip problems. Eventually, the blood flow returns, and the bone heals. This can take about 2 years. Perthes only happens in children. It's more common in boys and usually happens between the ages of 3 and 10.

## Symptoms of Perthes

- Pain in the hip, groin, thigh, or knee.
- The pain can last for a few weeks and usually gets worse with physical activity.
- Some children may walk with a limp or have trouble moving the hip (it can feel stiff).

## How Perthes is diagnosed?

Doctors usually diagnose Perthes by assessing the hip and taking an X-ray. Sometimes, other tests are needed to get a clearer picture of the hip. These tests may include:

- An MRI scan
- A bone scan
- An X-ray where dye is placed into the hip (called an arthrogram) to check if surgery is needed.

In some cases, blood tests or a sample of fluid from the hip joint may be taken to check for other problems like infections.

## The 3 Stages of Perthes

### 1. Initial Stage:

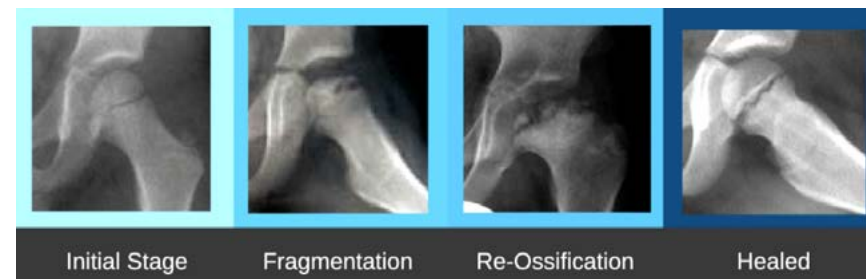
The blood supply to the hip bone stops, making the bone softer and flatter. This stage can last from a few months to a year.

### 2. Fragmentation Stage:

The blood supply returns, and the bone starts to heal. The bone becomes thicker and rounder.

### 3. Re Ossification Stage:

The bone hardens, and the femoral head (the top of the thigh bone) reshapes with new bone.



## Treatment for Perthes

Children with Perthes will see an Orthopaedic doctor regularly. They will have X-rays and check-ups to see how the condition is developing and to decide on the best treatment. About 60% of children with Perthes will recover without surgery.

During the active stage, children should avoid high-impact activities like running and jumping. Treatment may include:

- Physiotherapy (exercises to help with movement).
- Hydrotherapy (exercises in water).
- Using crutches to help walk.
- Sometimes, an operation to reshape the hip joint.

## Home Exercises

Your physiotherapist will show you and your child exercises to help the hip move better and make the muscles around the hip stronger. Activities like swimming, which don't put weight on the hip, are encouraged to keep the hip active.