One ball or two? An unusual cause of hip pain

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DESCRIPTION

A 7-year-old boy with no medical history was referred with intermittent right hip/groin pain, exacerbated by exercise. Examination was normal and initial investigation including ultrasound and MRI proved inconclusive. A prolonged course of physiotherapy failed to resolve the pain. Repeat examination was unremarkable with a full pain free range of movements in the hip. Owing to the very genuine nature of the symptoms and parental concern, a repeat MRI was performed. This clearly

demonstrated an undescended testicle not apparent on the previous scan (figure 1). Re-examination revealed an absent right testicle in the scrotum. A diagnosis of retracting testicle with episodes of torsion was made. After an orchidopexy all symptoms resolved, and the patient returned to full symptom free activities.

Learning points

- ▶ Hip pain has many causes and the clinician needs to bear in mind non-musculoskeletal causes.
- ▶ Examination of male children presenting with hip pain should include the scrotum. All clinicians are taught to examine the hip in children presenting with knee pain. We suggest that the presence of the testes in the scrotum should be checked in all male children with unexplained hip pain.
- ▶ This case reinforces the importance of re-examining patients with unexplained and persistent symptoms.

Figure 1 MRI of the right hip (coronal view) clearly demonstrating the right testicle in the inguinal canal (arrow).

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