The Young Adult Hip: Extra-Articular Causes of Hip Pain and How to Pick the Winners

E Bray, D Skinner, C Tweed, Giles Stafford
United Kingdom

Introduction
With increasing awareness of intra and extra-articular pathology, we believe intra-articular injection is essential in the diagnosis and management of young adult hip pain.

We aim to identify the proportion of patients with radiologically proven intra-articular pathology whose primary cause of pain was extra-articular.

Methods
Patients who were referred with intra-articular pathology such as labral tear underwent local anaesthetic and anti-inflammatory steroid intra-articular hip injection (ultrasound guided (US) or in theatre) as part of their work-up between April 2012 and April 2014.

We recorded: Age; BMI; pain relief; duration of relief; complications; further investigation results and management.

Results
A total of 141 injections were performed:
120 US guided, 23 in theatre.
- mean age 41.95 (95% CI 39.50 to 44.41)
- mean BMI 27 (95% CI 25.77 to 28.23)

The following complications occurred:
- 1 infected joint (US)
- 2 transient femoral nerve palsies (US)
- 5 significant steroid flares
- 1 haematoma (US)

Discussion
Symptomatic extra-articular pathology has been found in the majority who did not respond to intra-articular injection.

Hip pain in young adults is not always caused by intra-articular pathology, even in the presence of abnormalities on examination and imaging. A negative response to injection should alert the surgeon to the presence of extra-articular pathology even in the presence of abnormal hip scans.