



Slipped Capital Femoral Epiphysis

What is Slipped Capital Femoral Epiphysis (SCFE)?

SCFE is a condition that usually occurs in adolescents. It occurs when the “ball” of the femur bone stays in the socket of the hip, but *epiphysis (growth plate)* begins to *slip off the femur*. We don't fully understand why SCFE occurs in some adolescents. Sometimes it can occur bilaterally. It tends to occur more often in *boys > girls*.

Risk factors for developing SCFE:

- *Obesity*
- *Hypothyroidism*
- can run in families

What are the signs and symptoms of SCFE?

- pain in the groin, inner thigh or knee
- decreased mobility of the affected hip
- limping
- gait change – walk with the leg turned outward

How is it diagnosed?

SCFE is most often diagnosed with X-ray.

What is the treatment?

- *Surgery* is the mainstay of treatment – an orthopedic surgeon places a “pin” in the femur
- Prognosis is based on the severity of the “slip”
- While awaiting surgery, I recommend the children use crutches to avoid putting excessive weight on the hip

What are the potential complications from SCFE?

- Osteonecrosis – bone death
- Arthritis – damage to the cartilage of the hip
- Even after surgery, individuals can still develop arthritis. The best ways to help prevent recurrence and to help prevent degenerative disease is weight loss.

