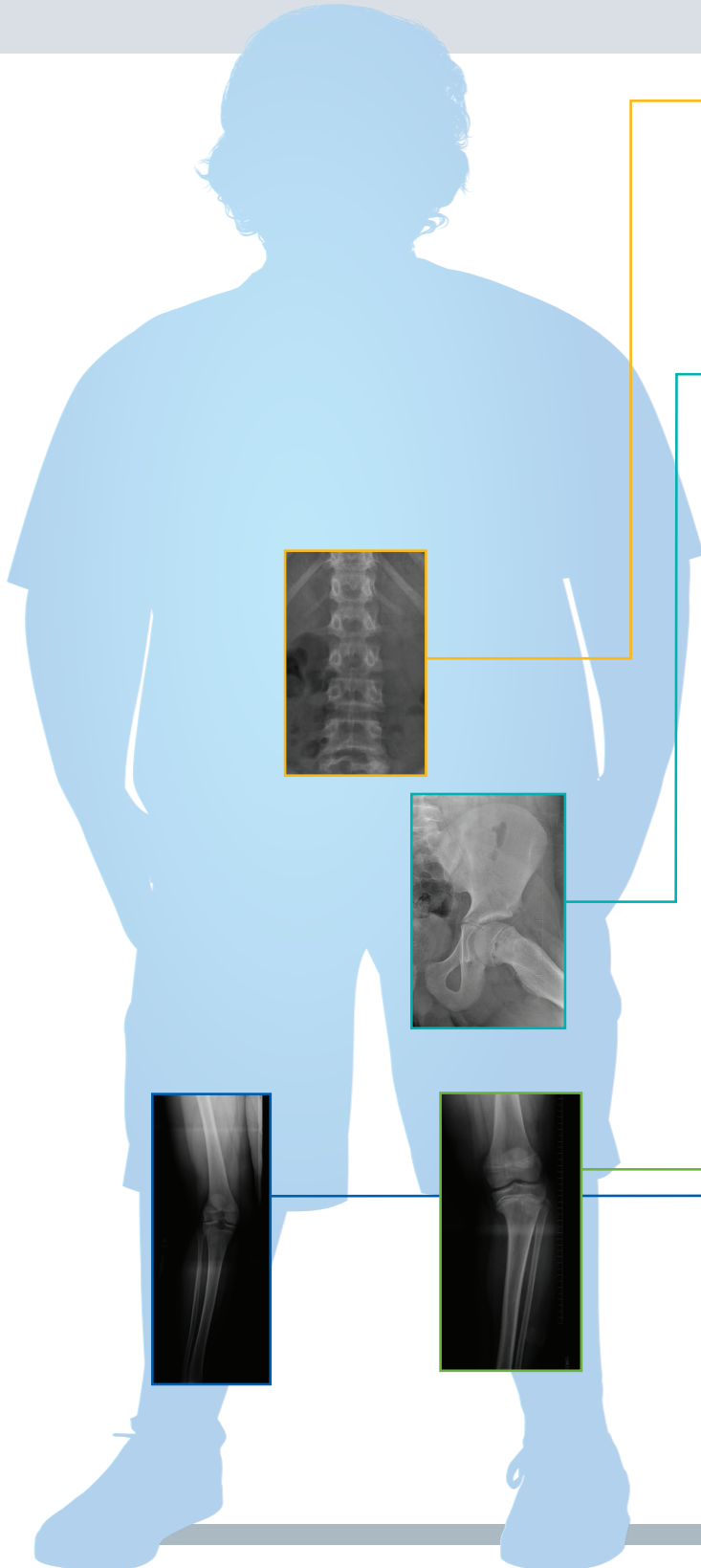


Kids, Bones, Joints & Obesity – Tips for Parents and Patients

Kids and teens suffering from obesity are at much higher risk of developing bone and joint problems. Parents and patients should look for the following problems, as finding them early allows for better treatment and may prevent lifelong problems that can interfere with comfort and the ability to lead an active life.



BACK

Back pain is more common in obese children.

Pain often improves with treatment, such as physical therapy and modifying activities.

Tests such as MRIs are not usually needed, but persistent back pain may require X-rays.

HIPS

Pain in the groin or inside of the thigh and knee may mean that there is a significant problem with the growth plate of the hips.

Pain when rotating the leg may be present. If the child has to rotate the leg outward when flexing the hip up to sit, this may also mean the growth plate of the hip is injured.

If experiencing pain in these areas, contact your health care provider and obtain X-rays.

Early diagnosis may allow for surgery with minimal incisions and prevent lifelong arthritis and the need for major surgery.

BOWED LEGS

While some bowing of the legs is common until about 2 years of age, worsening of the bowing is never normal.

Look at the distance between the knees when you put the child's ankles together. If the distance is increasing, contact your health care provider.

A standing X-ray of the legs usually indicates if there is a problem or not.

Early diagnosis may allow for a much less severe surgery or bracing, while diagnosis after your child is done growing can lead to lifelong arthritis.

KNOCK KNEES

It is normal for children to have mild knock knees, especially if they have large thighs.

Obesity can make knock knees worsen and can cause arthritis of the knees.

If the knock knee appears to be worsening, contact your health care provider about having standing X-rays done.

If your child is still growing, there is a treatment available using your child's growth to straighten the legs.

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