

## Severs Disease

Severs Disease is the most common source of heel pain in adolescents, particularly those aged between 9 and 14 years.

In children the heel bone (calcaneus) doesn't fully develop until about the age of 15. As the child grows new bone forms at the growth plate, which is a weakened area of soft bone at the back of the heel.

The calf muscle attaches directly onto this area at the back of the heel. Repetitive strain placed on this area by activities such as running and jumping within sport.



## Signs and Symptoms

- Heel pain ( particularly after activity)
- Tenderness over Achilles tendon
- Tightness in the calf
- In severe cases the child can be limping

## Treatment

Severs disease is a self-limiting condition that gradually resolves as the child reaches skeletal maturity.

Physiotherapy treatment can include:

- Soft tissue massage: This will help loosen tight muscles particularly the calf muscles at the back of the shin
- Activity Modification: Children who are participating in physical activity several times a week may need to cut down their training load
- Specifically designed exercises addressing flexibility, strength and balance issues
- Biomechanical correction
- Electrotherapy
- Advice regarding footwear including possible use of heel raises or orthotics

The decision as to whether patients continue playing sport is based on individual's symptoms and the level of pain felt during activities.

Physiotherapy is a vital tool for treating Severs disease in order to reduce pain, continue and increase activity levels and ensure the best outcome.

## Contributing Factors:

The likelihood of developing this condition is increased by several factors, including:

- Inappropriate footwear
- Calf tightness and weakness
- Poor foot/lower limb biomechanics
- High activity levels

If any of this sounds familiar please contact us on **9328 3822**. Ross and Emma, the physiotherapists for **Easts Rugby**, are conveniently located upstairs in the Club House.

