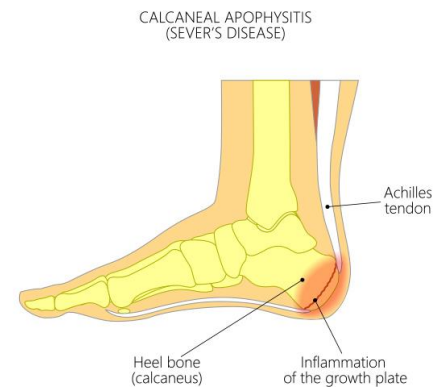


## Sever's Disease

Although the name might sound worrying, Sever's disease is the most common cause of heel pain in children aged 8-14, especially those who suddenly increase their level of activity such as at the beginning of a season or where sports cross over. It can be painful but is only temporary and has no long-term effects. Sever's disease is a type of growth plate injury at the back of the heel bone, where the Achilles tendon attaches. When the calf muscles and Achilles tendon become tight during growth spurts, they begin to pull on the soft, immature heel bone causing a traction like injury with inflammation and pain. Sever's disease rarely occurs in older children because the back of the heel usually hardens and the growing bones fuse together into mature bone by around the age of 15.

### Symptoms

- Heel pain
- Tender to touch
- Pain around the Achilles tendon
- Stiff calf muscles especially in the morning
- Increase in pain post exercise
- Limping
- Tendency to tiptoe
- In more chronic cases a tender lump, may be felt on the heel.



### Treatment

Sever's disease heals over time with age, however treatment should be sought in order to reduce the pain and the risk of relapse.

- Ice packs
- Avoiding training on hard surfaces
- Running re-education
- Avoid spikes in activity – make sure you build activity up gradually by 10% each week
- Soft tissue therapy will assist in relaxing and lengthening the muscles.
- Heel lifts - the use of a temporary sorbothane type heel lift will release the pressure off the Achilles tendon and the heel.
- Strengthening and stretching exercises
- Orthotics can aid the correction of imbalanced arches in severe cases
- Wearing well-fitting and supportive shoes will help to alleviate symptoms.

If you would like further advice from one of our paediatric trained physiotherapists, please do contact us at Physiofit.