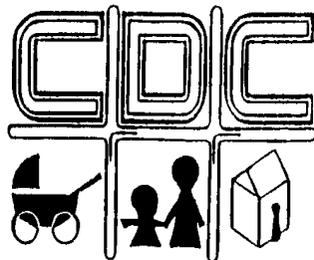


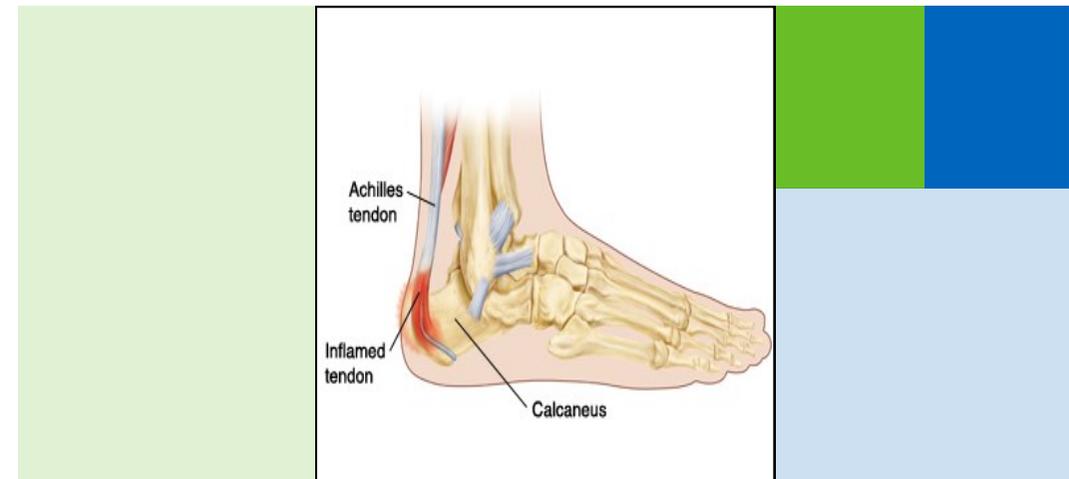
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## Paediatric Physiotherapy

### Sever's Disease



**A guide for parents and young people for the  
management of Severs disease**

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## What is Sever's Disease?

Sever's is a common cause of ankle and foot pain in children and adolescents.

Our bones grow faster than our muscles. During a period of rapid growth our muscles become tight relative to the bones growth. In Sever's the tight calf muscle (gastrocnemius) pulls on the growth plate in the heel bone causing irritation and inflammation. Overuse of the calf muscle means this inflammation does not get chance to settle.

Pain is often felt during or after sport, as an ache or pain in the heel. In severe cases, pain can be felt just walking.

## Who does it affect?

- Children aged between 8 and 16 years old.
- Children participating in activities that stress the Achilles tendon, such as jogging, jumping, and sudden turning especially on hard surfaces.
- Children going through a rapid growth spurt.
- It is more common in boys than girls.

## What are the signs and symptoms?

- Pain, redness, swelling, and/or tenderness at the back of the heel that usually worsens during or after physical activity.
- Discomfort with running and jumping, especially on hard surfaces such as concrete and tarmac.
- Sometimes children walk slightly on tiptoe to relieve the pressure on their heel.

## How is it managed?

Sever's can normally be self managed. Your physiotherapist will give you advice and may teach you exercises to help your pain to settle.

- **Modifying Activity:** Modifying how much exercise you are doing can allow for recovery and reduce your symptoms.
- **Ice:** Ice the affected area for 10 minutes especially after activity to help reduce swelling and pain.
- **Pain relief:** Pain relieving medication can assist in reducing your pain, but you will need to discuss the options available to you with your GP.
- **Footwear:** Well fitting, supportive shoes are advisable for cushioning the foot such as trainers, to reduce the pressure on your heel when walking or doing activity.
- **Gentle stretching:** Regular stretching of the calf muscles for 20-30 seconds can be beneficial. You will be taught specific exercises by your physiotherapist if necessary.

Example of calf stretching for your Achilles tendon

