

SEVERS DISEASE (Calcaneal Apophysitis)

With kids returning to school and sports in the coming weeks, it means a change in lifestyle, activity and footwear.

It is this time of the year that we see a lot of foot, ankle and heel pain in children.

One of the common sources of foot pain is a condition known as Severs disease, clinically known as Calcaneal Apophysitis.

The cause of Severs disease is typically from the growth of the heel bone being ahead of the growth of surrounding muscles and tendons, primarily Gastrocnemius (calf) muscles and Achilles tendon.

Excessive forces and overuse can cause swelling around the point of attachment where the Achilles tendon joins the heel bone. Pain is usually a result of the pulling of the Achilles tendon at the attachment point, or by increased impact (hitting the ground hard) at the heel, or a combination of both.

Typically, symptoms are limping, transferring to tip toes, tenderness, and tightness at the back the heel underneath the Achilles tendon and pain if the area is squeezed.

Severs disease is common in children aged between 8 – 14 years and is usually associated with a growth spurt, higher activity levels, changes in sports, ill-fitting shoes, flat or high arches and a pronated (inward rolling) foot.

Diagnosis of Severs disease is relatively straightforward with a squeeze test however the clinician must be sure to rule out other conditions such as stress fractures, so an X-Ray may be ordered.

Preventative measures include wearing supportive shoes, stretching of calves, heels and hamstrings, awareness of over training and avoiding excessive impact on hard surfaces. If symptoms flare up rest and ice can help relieve pain and tenderness.

Treatment of Severs disease is varied. Some of the treatments available include shock absorption around the heel area to help assist with ongoing impact symptoms, orthotics to help relieve bio-mechanical symptoms and a strengthening program for the lower limbs together with a proper stretching plan for Musculo-skeletal stability.

The Sports Medicine Institute is able to help with the diagnosis and treatment of Severs Disease.

To book and appointment with one of our practitioners CALL US on 9525 3444

