

GROWING PAINS.

The Pain of Growing Up.

“Growing pains” medically referred to as osteochondrosis, are a group of injuries that affect the growing skeleton of older children or young adolescents in their developing years.

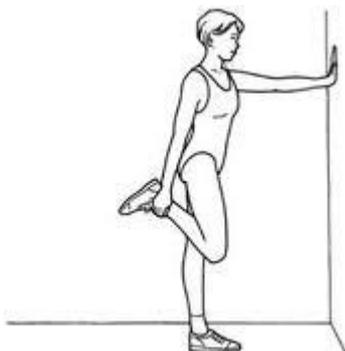
These injuries are predominantly seen in boys more than girls aged 10-14 years old. The reason they occur is put simply that as a child grows, their bones lengthen and it takes time for the muscles to catch up. As a result the tight muscle pulls on its attachment to the bone and causes inflammation and pain. This is usually worse with activity as there is increased demand on the muscle system.

They can occur all over the body yet 2 of the most common sites are at the knee (Osgood Schlatter’s syndrome) or the heel (Sever’s disease).

Management of these injuries is multifactorial and includes the following:

- 1) Activity modification – these conditions are often self limiting. Complete rest is usually not necessary but exercise substitution or a reduction in training loads may be needed.
- 2) Ice – can be used for 10-15 minutes a few times per day to settle the pain and inflammation. (be careful to cover the ice pack and not burn your skin)
- 3) Stretching the tight muscle group. This should be done as tolerated and not into pain. Key stretches are the quadriceps (thigh) muscle group for Osgood Schlatters, and calf muscle group for Sever’s. (see below)
- 4) Addressing biomechanics (ie: how the body moves) by looking at areas of weakness or misalignment and correcting these for optimal performance and efficiency.
- 5) Footwear advice and modification – suitable and adequate footwear is a must in any sport. Sometimes orthotics, or heel raises (in the case of Sever’s disease) can be beneficial.

Whilst these conditions are usually not serious, they can be somewhat frustrating and interfere with sporting activity in some cases for up to 6-12 months. By taking the above measures a quicker turnaround can be achieved, however as always with any injury you are best to get them checked by a professional early on.



Quadriceps stretch. Hold 20 second x 4 times. Do 3 times per day.



Calf stretch. Hold 20 second x 4 times. Do 3 times per day.