



## Sever's disease

### What is Sever's disease?

Sever's disease is an overuse syndrome found in children and adolescent athletes and is characterized by inflammation and pain around a growth plate in the back of the heel bone (calcaneus). This is the area where the heel cord (Achilles tendon) attaches to the heel bone. The pull of the tendon on the bone and growth plate can create inflammation. This may lead to pain with activities and occasionally a limp. The discomfort may last over a period of months.

### Who is at risk?

- Children and adolescents between the ages of 9-15 years old
- Children and adolescents who participate in running and jumping activities (e.g., volleyball, basketball, soccer, gymnastics, dance, etc.)
- Children and adolescents during growth spurts who have poor flexibility (tight muscles)
- Children and adolescents with flat feet because of muscular tightness of the Achilles tendon (heel cord)

### What are the symptoms?

- Pain, tenderness or swelling at the insertion site of the Achilles tendon on the back of the heel bone
- Muscular tightness in the gastrocnemius/soleus (calf) muscles
- Poor tolerance to running and jumping activities

### What are the treatment options?

- Rest from aggravating activities
- Ice the area after activity and when painful for 10-20 minutes, up to once an hour
- Muscle stretching to improve flexibility
  - Stretching should be done before and after activity
  - Focus on the gastrocnemius/soleus (calf) stretching
  - Stretch hamstring (back of thigh) and quadriceps (front of thigh)
- Heel pads, cups or lifts can be helpful to alleviate pain to the heel area

### When can athletes return to activity?

- This is a self-limiting condition that with muscle stretching and patience, resolves with time.
- Patients may continue with activity if the symptoms are mild by increasing their flexibility with muscular stretching and using ice after activity.
- For more severe symptoms, rest from activity is required for 10-24 months to improve the pain.

# We can help!

Schedule an appointment with our certified athletic trainer to get back in the game. We can help with treatment and rehabilitation of Sever's disease. We also can help with developing a home program to strengthen and stretch the muscles to make the condition more manageable.

To schedule an appointment or learn more, call 682-303-8070.



## Savana Turner, ATC

Athletic trainer at Cook Children's

**Education:** Bachelors of Arts in Athletic Training from the University of Northern Colorado; Master of Arts in Sports Administration from the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

**Biography:** Savana joined Cook Children's Orthopedics and Sports Medicine program at Walsh Ranch in 2019. Savana has experience working with all types of athletes, including extensive experience with softball, baseball, volleyball and wrestling athletes. While working in Alaska, Savana launched an outreach program focused on providing the local high schools and community with consistent access to an athletic trainer. Savana also treated patients at a physical therapy clinic, which allowed her to focus on her prevention and rehabilitation skills. Here, she played a critical role in providing the community with medical coverage for several state-wide athletic events, including the rodeo and mountain races. She also provided free movement screening for several organizations and student athletes.



## Location

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