

## Heel pain / Sever's disease / Calcaneal Apophysitis.

This is a very common painful condition that usually affects boys between the age of 8 and 13 years. The pain is usually experienced at the back of the heel or below the attachment of the Achilles tendon. It usually occurs when there is a change in activity, such as from swimming to rugby, or an increase in activity.

The heel may feel tender on touch and pressure, swelling and redness can be present. The child may also be more comfortable walking on his toes especially when getting out of bed or sitting for an extended period.

The condition is caused by excessive stress at the insertion of the Achilles tendon on the heel bone. This is due to increased activity or excessive pronation i.e. the feet rolling inwards causing the arch to drop.

The short term treatment of the condition is symptomatic, the use of ice on the area, topical anti-inflammatory creams or gels and physiotherapy, stretching exercises are also advised.

Long term treatment involves the identification of the cause of the problem. This is done by a podiatrist. It can either be treated by using heel cushioning or custom made arch supports. This depends on the diagnosis by the podiatrist and the severity of the condition.

It is also advisable that shoes be worn at all times to provide extra cushioning and absorb shock. The appropriate sport and running shoes are advised.