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# NorthPointe News



## SEVER'S DISEASE



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### A HEALTHIER 2018

Treat yourself to a healthier 2018 by concentrating on three important actions:

1. Make a fitness resolution that makes it easy to fit 30 minutes a day of physical activity into your busy life. You could resolve to go for a 30-minute walk after dinner every night, or to take two 15-minute walking breaks every day at work. If you do decide to join a gym, make a plan for when you'll go and what you'll do when you're there.

2. Think about your eating habits and how you can tweak them for weight management. Are you a nighttime snacker? Resolve to have a cup of tea or take a warm bath when you get the munchies. Do you tend to eat a lot of high-fat, high-sugar, energy-dense foods? Resolve to swap out some of these foods for foods with low energy density like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and beans.

3. Feel like old friends or family have fallen by the wayside? It's good for your health to reconnect with them. Research suggests people with strong social ties live longer than those who don't.



Calcaneal apophysitis is a painful inflammation of the heel's growth plate. It typically affects children between the ages of 8 and 14 years old, because the heel bone is not fully developed until at least age 14. Until then, new bone is forming at the growth plate, a weak area located at the back of the heel. When there is too much repetitive stress on the growth plate, inflammation can develop.

Calcaneal apophysitis is also called Sever's disease, although it is not a true "disease." It is the most common cause of heel pain in children, and can occur in one or both feet.

Heel pain in children differs from the most common type of heel pain experienced by adults. While heel pain in adults usually subsides after a period of walking, pediatric heel pain generally doesn't improve in this manner. In fact, walking typically makes the pain worse.

Overuse and stress on the heel bone through participation in sports is a major cause of calcaneal apophysitis. The heel's growth plate is sensitive to repeated running and pounding on hard surfaces, resulting in muscle strain and inflamed tissue. For this reason, children and adolescents involved in soccer, track, or basketball are especially vulnerable. Other potential causes of calcaneal apophysitis include obesity, a tight Achilles tendon, and biomechanical problems such as flatfoot or a high-arched foot.

Symptoms of calcaneal apophysitis may include:

- Pain in the back or bottom of the heel
- Limping
- Walking on toes
- Difficulty running, jumping, or participating in usual activities or sports
- Pain when the sides of the heel are squeezed

#### Treatment

Your NorthPointe Foot & Ankle surgeon may select one or more of the following options to treat calcaneal apophysitis:

- **Reduce activity.** The child needs to reduce or stop any activity that causes pain.
- **Support the heel.** Temporary shoe inserts or custom orthotic devices may provide support for the heel.
- **Medications.** Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen, help reduce the pain and inflammation.
- **Physical therapy.** Stretching or physical therapy modalities are sometimes used to promote healing of the inflamed issue.
- **Immobilization.** In some severe cases of pediatric heel pain, a cast may be used to promote healing while keeping the foot and ankle totally immobile.



Often heel pain in children returns after it has been treated because the heel bone is still growing. Recurrence of heel pain may be a sign of calcaneal apophysitis, or it may indicate a different problem. If your child has a repeat bout of heel pain, be sure to make an appointment with your NorthPointe doctor.

#### Prevention

The chances of a child developing heel pain can be reduced by:

- Avoiding obesity
- Choosing well-constructed, supportive shoes that are appropriate for the child's activity
- Avoiding or limiting wearing of cleated athletic shoes
- Avoiding activity beyond a child's ability.

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Doctors@NorthPointeFoot.com

# Self Test for Foot Problems

The Foot Health Foundation of America offers this simple quiz to pinpoint any warning signs of foot and ankle problems.

1. How much time do you spend on your feet each day?  
a. Less than 2 hours **0** b. 2 to 4 hours **1** c. 5 to 7 hours **2** d. 8 hours or more **3**
2. How old are you?  
a. Under 40 **0** b. Between 40 and 59 **1** c. 60 and over **2**
3. How would you describe your weight?  
a. At ideal weight or less than 20 pounds overweight **0**  
b. 20 to 39 pounds overweight **2**  
c. 40 or more pounds overweight **3**
4. Have problems with your feet or ankles ever prevented you from participating in:  
a. Leisure/sports activities? Yes **2** No **0**  
b. Work activities? Yes **3** No **0**
5. Have you ever received medical treatment for problems with your feet and/or ankles?  
a. Yes **3** b. No **0**
6. Do you regularly wear heels two inches or higher?  
a. Yes **2** b. No **0**
7. What types of exercise do you engage in or plan to engage in? (check all that apply)  
a. Walking **1** b. Field sports **2** c. Winter sports **2** d. Court sports **3**  
e. Aerobics **3** f. Running **3** g. None **0**
8. Do you have the appropriate shoes for your sport or sports?  
a. Yes **0** b. No **3**
9. Do you experience foot or ankle pain when walking or exercising?  
a. Rarely **1** b. Sometimes **2** c. Often **3** d. Never **0**
10. Do you:  
a. Do you exercise in footwear that is more than one year old or in hand-me-down footwear? Yes **3** No **0**  
b. Stretch properly before and after exercising? Yes **0** No **3**
11. Do you:  
a. Have diabetes? Yes **3** No **0**  
b. Experience numbness and/or burning in your feet? Yes **3** No **0**  
c. Have a family history of diabetes? Yes **2** No **0**
12. Do you: (check all that apply)  
a. Sprain your ankles frequently (once a year or more) or are your ankles weak? Yes **2** No **0**  
b. Have flat feet or excessively high arches? Yes **2** No **0**  
c. Experience pain in the Achilles tendon or heel or have shin splints (pain in the front lower leg)? Yes **2** No **0**  
d. Have corns, calluses, bunions or hammertoes? Yes **3** No **0**  
e. Have arthritis or joint pain in your feet? Yes **3** No **0**  
f. Have poor circulation or cramping in your legs? Yes **3** No **0**

Now total your score by adding the bolded blue number to the right of each answer. Find out what your score means by review the parameters at the right.

## What Does Your Score Mean?

**0 - 20 points:** Congratulations! Your feet and ankles are very healthy and you can maintain your active lifestyle and/or exercise regimen. With proper attention and care your feet and ankles should remain healthy; however, you may want to schedule an annual exam with our office to ensure their long-term health. Furthermore, if you scored points for questions 4, 5, 9, 11 or 12, you should contact our office in the near future for a check-up.

**21 - 40 points:** Pay attention. Your feet and ankles are showing signs of wear, placing you in the moderate risk category. Although you can continue your normal activities, you should contact our office for a check-up. If you participate in a rigorous exercise regimen on a regular basis or plan to - or if you scored points for questions 4, 5, 9, 11 or 12 - you should contact our office soon to safeguard your foot and ankle health.

**41 points or higher:** Caution. Your feet and ankles are at high risk for long-term medical problems and you should contact our office as soon as possible. If you exercise, you should pay particular attention to your feet and ankles until you are seen by your NorthPointe doctor. If you have not begun exercising, it is advisable to contact our office before undertaking any type of exercise.

## THANK YOU!

From Nov. 13 to Dec. 8 NorthPointe joined the Berkley Senior Center to collect new gloves, hats, scarves and socks for all ages. Hundreds of items were donated and distributed to those less fortunate in the community before Christmas—including students in the Berkley School District.

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all that supported this important drive.



*The doctors and staff of NorthPointe Foot & Ankle wish you and your family a healthy and happy New Year!*

# 2018