

# Osgood Schlatter's Disease



**Osgood Schlatter's is inflammation of the growth plates of the tibia (lower leg bone). This is caused by overpull of the patella tendon, which attaches the quadriceps (thigh muscles) to the patella (kneecap) and the tibial tuberosity.**

## When does Osgood Schlatter's occur?

Osgood Schlatters usually occurs in children between the ages of 10 and 15. It often occurs in children who are active playing running and jumping type sports, such as basketball, soccer, and football. It is common in both males and females.

## What is the cause of Osgood Schlatter's?

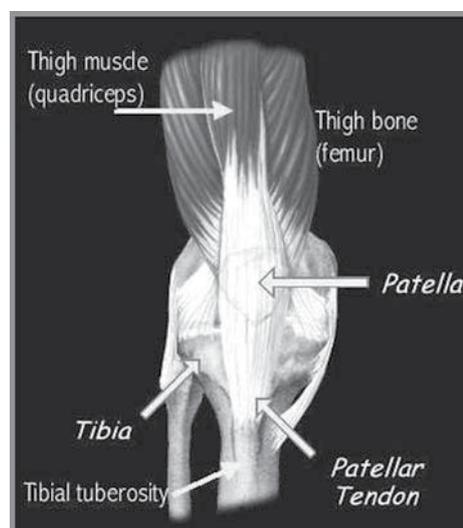
Before the age of 16, our bones are still growing from areas called growth plates. These are areas of cartilage, which separate the bone. In long bones like the tibia. This growth plate is located at the end of the bone. When we go through a period of rapid growth, our bones grow faster than our muscles and tendons. During these periods our tendons are therefore under extra strain.

Constant stress on the patella tendon from running and jumping causes extra strain on the patella tendon, resulting in inflammation of the tibia at its attachment, the tibial tuberosity.

Pronated or flat feet, weakened quadriceps muscles and misalignment of the patella may all contribute to increase the excessive strain on the patella tendon.

## What are the symptoms of Osgood Schlatters?

- Local pain and tenderness.
- Mild moderate swelling.
- Limping.
- Pain usually comes on during or immediately following exercise.
- Running and jumping are often most painful.



## What is the long-term effect of Osgood Schlatter's?

Osgood Schlatter's disease is a self-limiting condition, and will resolve when the growth plate is closed. Unfortunately in the meantime Osgood Schlatter's can be painful and prevent participation in sporting activities. It will usually resolve by the age of 16 at which time the growth plate has closed.

## What treatments can be carried out at home to relieve the pain of Osgood Schlatter's?

We suggest the following tips to help reduce their pain:

- Reduce the amount of sport—this does not mean your child has to completely stop participating in sport, but a reduction in the amount of participation until symptoms resolve is recommended.
- Avoid walking barefoot—walking barefoot does not adequately support the foot and increases the amount of tension placed on the growth plate.
- Icing—the use of an ice pack for 10 to 15 minutes on the affected heel can help reduce the pain and inflammation in the area. This should be carried out whenever possible especially after sports activities.
- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatories, such as Neurofen or Aspirin, may be recommended to reduce swelling and inflammation.

## What Podiatric treatments are available for Osgood Schlatter's Disease?

Firstly your Podiatrists will advise you on appropriate techniques for the at home treatments described above. Other treatment techniques your Podiatrist may use include:

- Orthoses—your Podiatrist may also discuss the use of foot orthoses as part of a treatment plan. This is especially important if there are biomechanical factors that exacerbate the tension on the patella tendon. This will help support the foot and reduce the effect of biomechanical abnormalities such as an excessively pronated foot (flat feet).
- Stretching—your podiatrist will advise you on stretching the quadriceps to help relieve some of the tension placed on the patella tendon.
- Training changes—depending on your activities the podiatrist may recommend modifications to your training regime.

**Please note:** The information in this document should not be used as a substitute for podiatric or medical attention.