

# Sever's Disease



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## Ankle Anatomy

The ankle joint is made up of 3 bones, the tibia, fibula and talus, as well as multiple ligaments. The fibula is located on the outside of the lower leg and the tibia, also known as the shin bone, is on the inside of the lower leg. The fibula and tibia come together forming a notch at the bottom, where the talus sits. The ligaments that connect the bones to each other allow for stabilization while moving in specific directions. There are many muscles and tendons that help you control your ankle. The Achilles tendon is the one that is affected in Sever's disease.



## What is Sever's disease?

Sever's disease is when the growth plate in the calcaneus (heel) is inflamed.

## What causes Sever's disease?

Sever's disease is directly related to overuse of the bone and tendon. It is common in growing children and adolescents, as during this time, bones, muscles, tendons and other structures are growing rapidly. Physically active youth are especially prone, as running and jumping puts additional stress on bones and muscles. Bones in growing children have a special area where the bone grows, called the growth plate. The growth plate is usually at the end of the bone and made up of cartilage. When you are done growing, this turns into solid bone. Growth plates can serve as an attachment for tendons (strong tissue that connects muscle and bone). The growth plate of the calcaneus (heel) is where the Achilles tendon attaches. When you are active, the Achilles tendon pulls on the tendon, which then pulls on the heel. This can lead to an inflammation of the growth plate, and it might even become a visible bump.

## What do I do if I think I have Sever's disease?

Some symptoms of Sever's disease are:

- Pain and tenderness in the heel after athletic activity
- Bump over the painful area
- Tight calf muscles

If you think you suffer from Sever's disease, you may want to take some pain reliever to alleviate the pain. You may also want to see your physician and discuss physical therapy in order to stretch and strengthen the lower extremity muscles. If the pain becomes intense, you may want to limit your activity. Make sure you talk to your coach. If you need to see a physician, call 206 598 3294, option 8 to set up an appointment with the UW Sports Medicine Center at Husky Stadium. Mention that you are a Seattle United athlete and they will get you in within 48 hours.