



Growing pains

What Are Growing Pains?

'Growing pains' is a common term for aches that occur in children, though they are not directly caused by growing.

These pains usually appear in the legs (thighs, calves, behind the knees, or shins), and are not a sign of injury or illness. They are common and usually go away on their own.

Growing pains are harmless and very frequent. About 1 in 4 children experiences them. They usually appear between ages 3 and 12, and are slightly more common in girls.

How Does It Present?

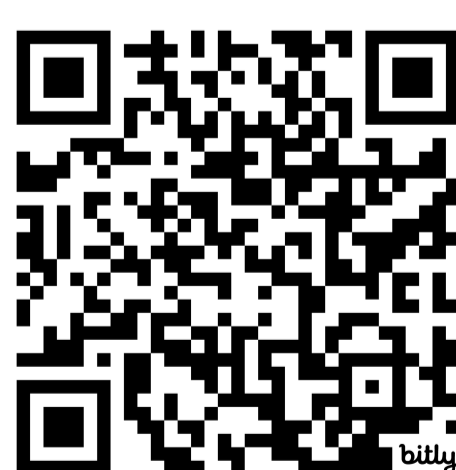
- Pain in one or both heels, especially after activity.
- Pain is often described as sharp, throbbing, or cramp-like.
- Usually appears in both legs, sometimes also in the arms.
- Tends to occur in the evening or at night.
- Can wake the child from sleep.
- No signs of swelling, redness, or fever.
- Symptoms may appear after intense activity or a long day of walking/running.
- Children feel fine during the day and can walk and play normally.
- They may return from time to time, over months or even years.

Consult your doctor if your child...

- ▶ Has persistent or intense pain.
- ▶ Shows redness, swelling, or fever.
- ▶ Has pain in **only one leg** or joint.
- ▶ Loses appetite, energy, or starts limping.
- ▶ Has difficulty walking or pain during the day.



More sheets are available at www.epos.org/parent-info. This sheet may also be available in other languages.



Additional information



- ▶ The diagnosis is clinical. Tests or X-rays are usually not needed, unless symptoms are atypical.
- ▶ Symptoms often go away on their own, although they may recur.
- ▶ Growing pains do not lead to joint problems or long-term issues.



How Is It Treated?

Growing pains do not need medication or special tests. They usually go away with time.

To relieve discomfort:

- Gently massage your child's legs if they are sore.
- Use a warm (not hot) compress or heating pad.
- Stretching exercises can help.

Children do not need to stop activities or sports, they can continue their normal life.

