PromoteHealth
Physiotherapy & Performance

A confident, informed return to movement and sport

CHILDREN & TEENS • MUSCLE, JOINT & BONE HEALTH

Growing bodies: a guide for families

Growth-related conditions need different care. Pain, swelling or a limp should be assessed rather than labelled growing pains. Use this overview alongside your child's individual plan.

CONDITIONS YOU MAY HEAR ABOUT

01	TENDON ATTACHMENTS **Knee & heel pain**	Traction apophysitis: Osgood-Schlatter (bump below the knee), Sinding-Larsen-Johansson (lower kneecap) and Sever's (heel). Repeated loading can irritate these growing areas; activity changes and guided rehab often help.
02	HIP CONDITIONS **Limp or knee pain**	Perthes' disrupts blood supply to the hip ball. Slipped upper/capital femoral epiphysis (SUFE/SCFE) is a hip growth-plate slip needing urgent hospital care. Both can cause a limp or hip, thigh or knee pain.
03	JOINT SURFACE **Pain or locking**	Osteochondritis dissecans (OCD) affects bone beneath joint cartilage, often in the knee. The area may become unstable. Pain, swelling or locking needs assessment; treatment may include activity restrictions.
04	SPINAL SHAPE **Curves & posture**	Scoliosis is a sideways spinal curve with rotation. Scheuermann's kyphosis is a structural rounding linked to wedged vertebrae. A changing curve or persistent back pain needs assessment and monitoring during growth.

AFTER AN OVERUSE DIAGNOSIS

Reduce painful running and jumping. Follow your child's exercise plan and rebuild sport gradually with their clinician.

FOLLOW THE SPECIFIC PLAN

Hip, cartilage and spinal conditions may need scans, specialist care or restrictions. Follow the plan for the diagnosis.

WHEN TO GET MEDICAL HELP

Go to A&E now: sudden hip, thigh or knee pain; inability to bear weight; a deformed limb; or a limp with fever or feeling unwell. Call 999 if seriously unwell or safe transport is not possible.

Possible SUFE/SCFE: if suspected by a clinician, stop weight-bearing and attend hospital immediately. Do not walk it off or stretch the hip.

Get a medical review: any unexplained limp, persistent swelling, a locking joint, night pain, weight loss or a changing spinal curve. New weakness or bladder/bowel changes need urgent assessment.

INFORMED BY: NHS: Limping in children; paediatric MSK guidance • AAOS: OCD
OUH: Perthes' • NHS: Scoliosis / Kyphosis • RCH: SUFE

Disclaimer: For general information only; not a replacement for professional medical advice or an individual rehabilitation plan.

GET IN TOUCH

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Physiotherapy in Abingdon | Online support available