



Knowing your Young Athlete

As a parent, you probably struggle with knowing when your child's complaints of aches and pains are grounds for a visit to your family doctor or if he or she is just trying to avoid that big math test tomorrow. It is possible that your child is feeling pain, but this isn't necessarily cause to sound the alarm. According to a pediatric specialist at the University of Michigan, it is common for healthy children to have aches and pains; these pains are just growing pains, and they are normal.

Growing pains are typical for children ages 6 to 11. This particular type of pain can be described as dull and achy, and is commonly felt in the legs. These pains generally last about 10 to 15 minutes and occur during sleep, when children are most likely to experience growth spurts. Growing pains are generally a result of several mechanical factors such as joint mobility, flat feet, lowered pain tolerance, reduced bone strength, delayed muscle to bone growth ratios, or emotional stressors.

Even though growing pains are harmless and usually go away on their own, they can sometimes mask other medical issues, especially in young athletes. Often, cramping is a symptom of potassium deficiency or dehydration, so it's important to keep an eye out for other symptoms that don't present with growing pains, such as limping, constant pain in one spot, swelling, fatigue, bruising, or a fever. If any of these symptoms emerge, it could very well be time to consult a medical professional.

It is recommended that parents remain calm and soothe the child, as fear and stress typically heighten the intensity of growing pains, however, if you are concerned about your child's pain, **HealthQuest** is here to help.

As experts in pain management, our physical therapists specialize in the treatment of pediatric pains, and are specifically trained to employ the use of modalities and manual techniques to help your child achieve basic comfort.

Growing pains can occur when muscular growth is delayed in relation to bone growth.

- Current Problems in Pediatric Adolescent Health Care, August 2010

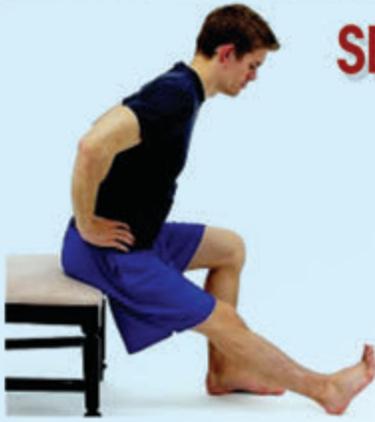
Quote

OF THE MONTH

"I seldom end up where I wanted to go, but almost always end up where I need to be."

- Douglas Adams

If your child is experiencing GROWING PAINS call us Toll Free at 1-855-477-8463 to schedule your FREE Consultation!



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SEATED HAMSTRING STRETCH

While seated, rest your heel on the floor with your knee straight. Gently lean forward until a stretch is felt behind your knee/thigh.

Hold for 15 seconds. Repeat three times, alternating legs, once in the morning and once before bed.

QUAD STRETCH - STANDING

While in a standing position, bend your knee back and hold your ankle.

Next, gently pull your knee into a more bent position.

Hold for 15 seconds. Repeat three times, alternating legs, once in the morning and once before bed.



Always consult your physical therapist or physician before starting an exercise regimen.

HealthQuestion

Name the Lions' running back drafted in 1989 who declined the opportunity to beat the rushing title record because they had already won the game, reportedly saying, "Coach, let's just win it and go home."

Visit www.HQPT.com, and click on the **HealthQuestion** button on the left hand side of our home page. If you answer correctly, you will be entered in a drawing to win a **\$100 Gas Card!**
Contest closes on September 30, 2013.



**Congratulations to our
July Contest Winner,
Dave S. from Lake Orion!**

Results...



After many sleepless nights with our seven year old, Zach, we decided to see our family doctor regarding a solution to the pain he complained of at night. Our doctor suggested we go to HealthQuest for an orthotics fitting, where a free consult was suggested. After converting to patient status, we noticed an improvement in Zach's sleep almost immediately. He stopped complaining about pains after a week of therapy. We will continue to do the exercises at home. This has been such a positive experience for our family; should we need physical therapy in the future, we will definitely come back!

~ Michelle, Rochester

Ask the Therapist...

Question: How can I be sure that my child's growing pains are really just that, and not something more concerning?

Answer: Growing pains are a common experience for children, generally between the ages of 5 and 12, when they experience the most amount of growth. Our bones grow at a more programmed pace, while our muscles stretch to fit them. During growth spurts, the bones outgrow the muscles, causing tightness and stress in the limbs. When growing pains begin to be predictable (i.e. they always occur during higher activity levels or with specific activities) or they limit your child from participating in any activities that he or she really loves, then you should seek medical attention from a pediatric specialist immediately.

Question: How can I tell if my young athlete is overexerting his or her physical capacity?

Answer: As the number of organized youth athletic programs has increased, so has the intensity of the programs; as a result, there has also been an increase of overuse injuries in children. The main focus for you, as a parent, should be to constantly monitor your child's symptoms and to educate your children to listen to their bodies and identify what hurts and how much.

Question: I see a lot of kids with their knees and ankles taped... what's that about?

Answer: Tape and bracing is often used as an assistive support for a weakened or injured body part; it can also be used to prevent injury. The most important part of insuring your children remain healthy and able to participate throughout their childhood is to assure that they are properly conditioned and all injuries are treated with the proper amount of time away from the activity, coupled with rehabilitation. A child should never have to rely on tape or bracing to keep participating. Proper strengthening, flexibility, and other exercises prescribed by a trained professional should eliminate the need for artificial stability.

This month's Ask the Therapist section is brought to you by Mark Kast (left). Mark graduated from the University of Michigan - Flint with a Masters in Physical Therapy in 1993, and has spent the last 20 years seeking every opportunity to further his knowledge and understanding of both adult and pediatric orthopedics, including a position at Children's Hospital of Michigan. In his quest to further his own knowledge, Mark joined Vice President of Operations, Robb Aikens (also pictured) and the rest of the HealthQuest team in 2011 to learn more about adult orthopedics and help us strengthen the reputation of our pediatrics program and honor our commitment to help people of all ages live life well.



Do you know your young athlete?

Look inside; we can help...

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