

### When should I seek medical advice?

Contact your GP or healthcare professional if your child has:

- A persistent limp or difficulty walking.
- Swelling, redness, or warmth in a joint or limb.
- Pain affecting the joints.
- Fever, weight loss, or unusual tiredness.
- Pain that is getting worse or does not improve with pain relief.
- Persistent waking in the night.

### Will they go away?

They usually improve over time as children grow older. Leg pains can be worrying, but they are relatively common and often manageable with simple measures at home.

### What next?

You will be placed on a patient-initiated follow-up (PIFU) for six months. Following the advice provided should help manage your child's symptoms. If your child is still struggling after three months, please contact us on 01623 672384 and we will be happy to arrange a further appointment if needed.

### Further sources of information

NHS Choices: [www.nhs.uk/conditions](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions)

Our website: [www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk](http://www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk)

### Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

**King's Mill Hospital:** 01623 672222

**Newark Hospital:** 01636 685692

**Email:** [sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net)

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email [sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net).

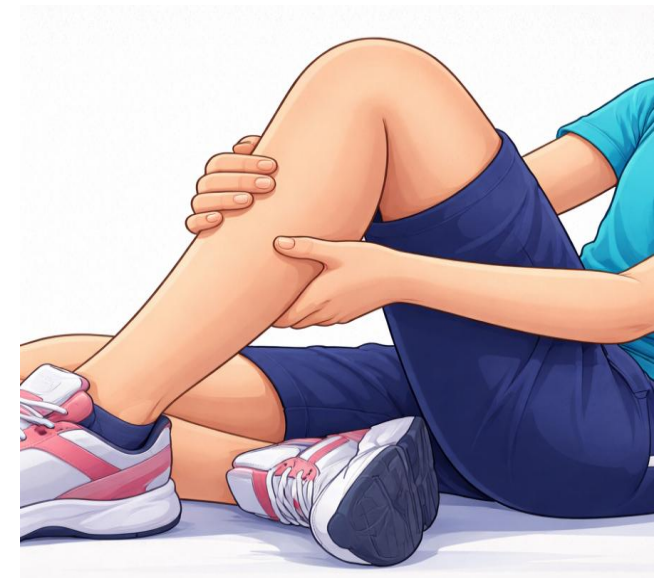
This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you. External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them.

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet (if relevant), please email [sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net) or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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## INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS, PARENTS, GUARDIANS AND CARERS

### Lower limb/leg pains in children



### **What is lower limb or leg pain?**

Pains in the legs can be common in children and young people. It is right to get them checked out by a healthcare professional however, they do not typically cause any long-term damage.

They are often related to growth, but this is not always the case. These pains may come and go and often improve as children get older.

### **What does it feel like?**

Your child may describe:

- Pain in the thighs, calves, or behind the knees.
- Aching or throbbing pain in the legs.
- Pain in both legs (often).
- Pain in the muscles.

They can often:

- Occur in the evening or at night.
- Wake your child from sleep.
- Ease as the day begins.

### **Why does it happen?**

The exact cause is not fully understood.

It may be related to:

- Daily activity.
- Muscle tiredness or fatigue.
- Children who are more flexible.
- Growth spurts.

### **What can you do to help?**

- Gentle massage of the legs.
- Warm baths or heat packs before bedtime.
- Provide reassurance that the pain is not harmful.
- Use paracetamol or ibuprofen if needed (follow dosing guidance).
- Modify activity levels for a short period of time.
- Warm up sufficiently before any activities.

### **Stretching**

Stretching can help reduce discomfort. Focus on calf, hamstring and thigh muscles. As an example, they could be done before bedtime or after activity.

A typical routine may look something like choosing two stretches per muscle group and completing three rounds of 30 seconds of each exercise twice per day. A certain level of discomfort is normal however; it is important you find the correct level for your child. An easy test for this is can they hold the stretch for 30 seconds. If they cannot hold it for that long, the intensity of the stretch should be reduced.

Your physiotherapist will be happy to provide guidance on this.

### **Vitamin D**

Vitamin D helps keep bones and muscles healthy. UK guidance recommends:

- That everyone should consider taking a daily vitamin D supplement during the autumn and winter.
- Children aged 1–4 years should take a daily vitamin D supplement. The typical recommended dose is 10 micrograms (400 IU) daily, which is enough for most people.
- Vitamin D supplements may be available free through the Healthy Start scheme for eligible families.

### **Activity**

Children should stay active and continue normal play and exercise. Government guidance recommends that children (aged 5 to 18 years) aim for at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day

When symptoms are worse, high-impact activities (e.g. running, jumping) may feel more uncomfortable.

Lower-impact activities (e.g. swimming, cycling) may be helpful considerations during this time.

It is appropriate to adjust activity levels based on symptoms

Encourage movement within comfort limits and avoid complete rest unless advised.