

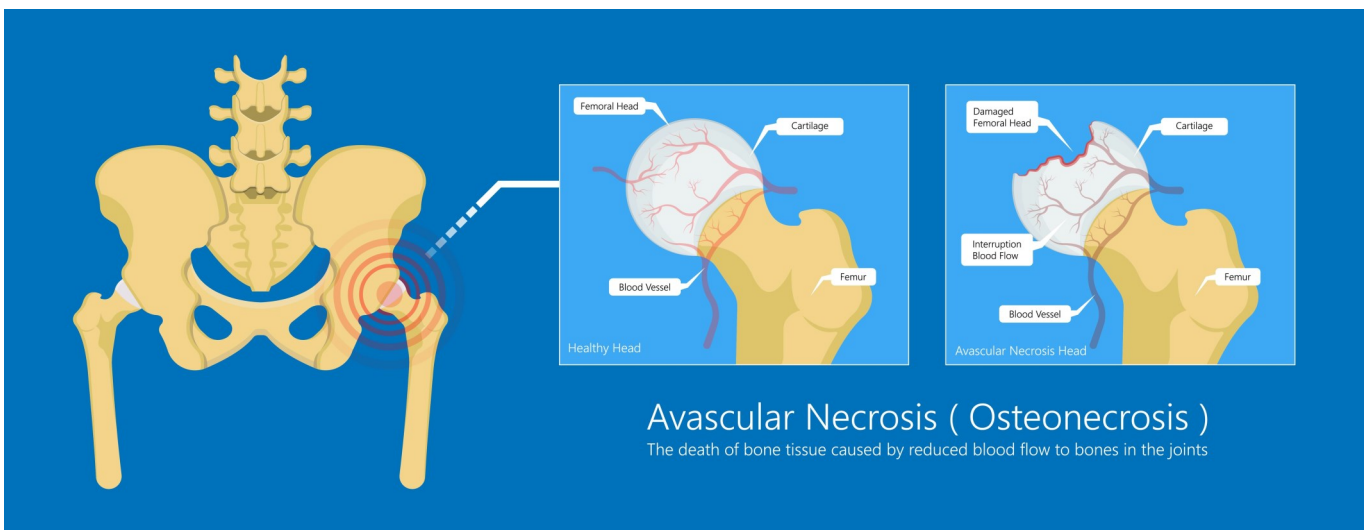


The Association of Paediatric Chartered Physiotherapists

APCP Information - Perthes Disease (Legg-Calve-Perthes Disease) Information for Parents and Carers

What is Perthes disease?

Perthes is a childhood condition that affects the hip joint. The hip joint consists of two parts: the socket (acetabulum / pelvis) and the ball joint (the femoral head / thighbone). In Perthes, the blood supply to the top of the thighbone becomes disrupted, causing the bone to become soft and break up. This is called necrosis. It is not known why this happens and there is no known link between physical activity or other childhood diseases and poor blood supply. It is more common in boys than in girls and usually affects children between 4-10 years old.



What are the Symptoms?

Symptoms can be subtle, and children can present with:

- A limp (with or without pain)
- Complaints of ache in the groin, thigh or knee
- Reduced range of movement in hip (specifically rotation and abduction – moving the leg out to the side)
- Reduced activity (sports, running, etc.) due to pain and limping
- Loss of muscle bulk on the affected side
- Sometimes shortening of the affected leg

Treatment and management of Perthes

Treatment and management of Perthes depends on individual findings and X-rays, and will focus on specific symptoms. Your orthopaedic consultant will be able to advise on the most appropriate protocol/ plan as well as weight-bearing status.

This may include:

- Rest
- Pain relief (Analgesia)
- Limited activity / modified activity
- Specific exercises to maintain strength and mobility
- Walking aids such as crutches
- Reviews / reassessments

Your physiotherapist will work closely with your consultant to ensure the treatment/management plan is safe and individual to each patient's findings.

What are the long term effects?

Although more than half of children with Perthes will return to their normal level of activity, some children may need additional surgeries during childhood and/or as adults. Your orthopaedic consultant will advise on any reviews and re-assessments needed to track longer term progress and/or changes.

For more information, please refer to [Perthes Disease - Parents Guide](#)

This leaflet has been produced following a review of relevant literature and where there is lack of evidence, a consensus of expert opinion is agreed, correct at time of publication.

APCP

<https://apcp.csp.org.uk>

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The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy is the professional, educational and trade union body for the UK's 50,000 chartered physiotherapists, physiotherapy students and associates.