



Food and nutrition with naturopath **SOPHIE ATKIN**  
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# Growing shouldn't be a pain

## Treating growing pains naturally



Typical growing pains occur during periods of rapid growth and are felt as deep aches in the muscles and bones. Even though it can be very uncomfortable for your child or teenager, there is no damage being done to their bones or muscles.

Growing pains usually occur in the late afternoon or evening. Most children experience growing pains between the ages of three and seven years, although pre-teens may also experience growing pains.

Alongside typical growing pains, headaches and migraines as well as disturbed sleep and more emotional sensitivity can also accompany a growth spurt.

When children's bones grow at a rapid rate, ligaments and muscles struggle to keep up with the demand of nutrients required for growth.

Whichever type of symptoms your child gets, if it correlates with a growth spurt then you need to consider their mineral intake. Growing shouldn't be a pain and, from a holistic perspective, diet and nutrition can heal the root of the problem.

Growing bones, ligaments and muscles require a lot of minerals, and the pain experienced can simply be a sign that the child's body is deficient in the required nutrients.

### TOP FIVE STRATEGIES FOR GROWING PAINS:

- **Diet and nutrition:**  
Reduce the white refined foods and sugar in the diets of growing children, as this further depletes the growth nutrients. Instead fill them up on foods high in magnesium, zinc, calcium and omega 3 oils.
- **Plenty of rest and sleep:**  
At this time children also need a lot more sleep. Children tend to be busy with sports, school and extracurricular activities, and their bodies need time to repair and grow. This all happens when they are asleep.
- **Massaging the painful area:**  
You can do a basic rub-down yourself, or see a chiropractor, myotherapist, physiotherapist or other body work practitioner for more specific treatments. If your child has flat feet, a trip to the podiatrist may be beneficial.
- **Heat treatments, such as warm baths and heat packs:**  
Epsom salt baths can be particularly useful, as the warm water and magnesium combination works well.
- **Nutritional supplements or celloids can be helpful to relax the muscles:**  
Try CPMP for tight achy muscles or PCIP if there is swelling or heat in the legs.

### GROWING PAINS HOME-MADE ESSENTIAL OIL RUB

If your child is growing at an exponential rate, you may like to massage this combination of oils into their legs and feet at night:

- **5 drops of peppermint, rosemary, and lavender essential oil mixed into a tablespoon of olive oil or coconut oil.**
- **You can keep left overs in an airtight container or jar in the fridge or use it all immediately. It will be fine to use for about five days.**

### CAUTION:

If your child has leg pain in the mornings which is relieved by moving, they may have a more serious condition than growing pains. Please seek advice from a qualified practitioner.