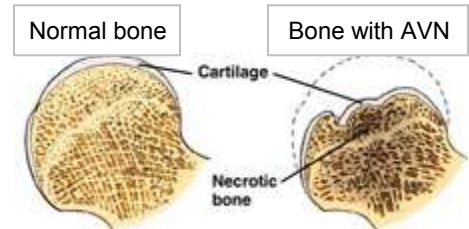


## **Sickle Cell Disease: Avascular Necrosis**

### **What is avascular necrosis?**

Avascular necrosis (AVN) is a disease that affects the bones. The tops of the bones should be round.

- With AVN the bones change shape and become somewhat flat.
- There is less blood flowing to those areas. This slowly causes pain to the area.
- It is more common in the hips and shoulders.



### **What are the symptoms?**

- Constant hip, thigh or shoulder pain. The pain may feel different from sickle cell pain.
- If AVN is in the hips, you may notice a limp or may have a hard time walking. It may also be hard to move the legs in some positions.
- If AVN is in the shoulders, the arms may not be able to move in some positions such as lifting the arm over the head.

**If you suspect AVN, please call the Sickle Cell Center.**

### **What will happen if the doctors think there is AVN?**

- X-rays or an MRI of the hip(s) or shoulder(s) will be done.
- Pain medicines may be needed.
- A bone doctor, called an orthopedic doctor, will need to be seen.

**ALERT:** Call the doctor, nurse, or the Sickle Cell Center if you have any concerns or if:

- You think you have AVN
- There are special health care needs not covered by this information.

**Sickle Cell Center:** (414) 257-1232, Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM. **Ask to talk with a nurse.**

**After hours, weekends or holidays,** call (414) 266-2000 and ask for the hematologist on call.

**This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for yourself or your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.**