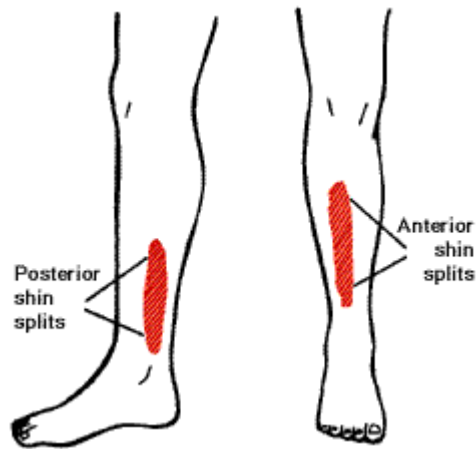


Shin Splints

Shin splints are commonly known as injuries to the front or inside edge of the lower leg or shinbone (tibia). This injury is common in runners and jumpers and is usually caused by overuse or doing too much, too quickly. Changes in running surfaces, distance and speed contribute to shin splints.

What are the symptoms?

Shin splints feels like a dull, aching pain in the lower leg, below the knee and above the ankle. You may feel tenderness in the muscle on the front of the lower leg, as well as pain when lifting toes up in the air.



Shin splints can be aggravated by recent change in your walking and running regimen or changes in footwear. You may also notice pain first thing in the morning.

Treatment

You can treat shin splints in a number of ways.

The first step is calming down inflammation. Stop any aggravating activities to allow sore areas to rest. Over the counter anti-inflammatories, taken as directed, as well as ice can help relieve pain and swelling. Icing can be done in a number of different ways:

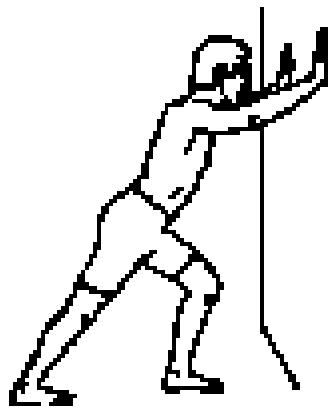
- Apply a commercial cold pack or a bag of frozen vegetables to the affected area for 20 minutes. Allow 40 minutes before re-icing.
- Freeze water inside a small paper cup and massage the sore areas for 5 minutes.

After settling down the inflammation, specific exercises are important to help relieve pain and allow you to return to pain-free activities.

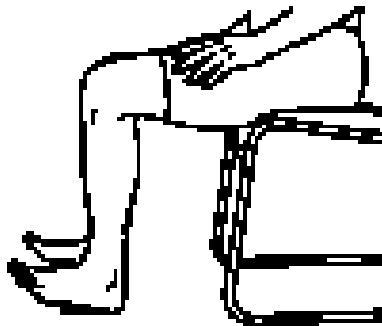
Kneeling stretch: With injured foot pointed behind, slowly lean down and back until gentle stretch is felt. Hold 30 seconds. Relax. Repeat 3 times per set. Do 2 sessions per day.



Standing Calf Stretch: Stand with injured foot back, leg straight, forward leg bent. Keeping heel on floor, turned slightly out, lean into wall until stretch is felt in calf. Hold 30 seconds. Repeat 3 times per set. Do 2 sessions per day.



Seated Toe Raise: Raise toes, keeping heels on floor. Repeat 10 times per set. Do 3 sets per session. Do 1 session per day.



Bicycling and swimming are good alternatives to running, allowing you stay active without aggravating symptoms. When returning to running, proper footwear is also important. Well-cushioned shock absorbing shoes and inserts are beneficial to decrease the stress on the lower leg which contributes to shin splints.

If your symptoms persist or become more severe, you may need to follow up with an orthopaedic specialist. Call 630-225-BONE to schedule an appointment with a physician from OAD Orthopaedics.

Disclaimer:* This information should NOT be used in place of visit with your healthcare provider, nor should you disregard the advice of your health care provider because of any information you read in this topic.