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Physical Therapy

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Shin Splints

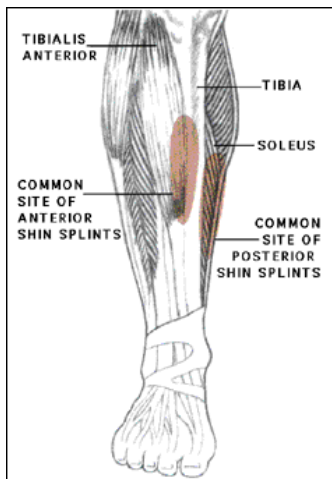
'Shin Splints' is a descriptive term used to describe general lower leg pain in front of the tibia. The cause of 'shin splints' can come from problems from the bone, muscle attachment to the bone, or the muscle itself.

What causes shin splints? Generally the most common cause of anterior shin pain is medial tibial stress syndrome which is caused by overuse. This is what most people are referring to when using the term 'shin splints'. Overuse occurs when an athlete is training and increases mileage, is training hard, or many miles like marathon runners. Overuse causes an irritation to the tendons and the attachment of these tendons to the bone. Other factors that contribute include poor running technique, incorrect footwear for foot type, and muscle imbalances altering stress on the front part of the leg.

Other causes of anterior shin pain are Stress Fractures or exercise induced compartment syndrome. Shin splints or medial tibial stress syndrome has to be diagnosed by ruling out the other two possibilities by a medical exam and or X-Ray if a stress fracture is thought to be the cause.

Treatment Tips:

1. Modifying training to incorporate more cross training, decrease intensity of training, decrease mileage or stop training completely if pain continues despite modifications. This will allow inflammation to resolve and healing to begin.
2. Ice for 15 minutes, multiple times through the day and after activity that typically increases symptoms to eliminate and prevent inflammation.
3. Stretch, stretch, stretch – focus on anterior tibialis and calf muscles. Hold for 30 seconds, multiple times per



day to prevent shortening of the muscle when healing.

4. Physical Therapy will incorporate modalities to assist with pain relief and inflammation, a progressive strengthening and stretching program specific to your needs, manual therapy to address soft tissue limitations and advice and guidance on return to full function.
5. Orthotics or correct footwear may be recommended.
6. Don't ignore it – not addressing this problem in the short term may lead to a chronic, ongoing problem.

The information on this page is provided to you from Performance Physical Therapy. It is not intended to replace any information/treatment provided to you by your health care provider. Please feel free to check with your Physical Therapist if you have any questions about the information provided on this page.

We are here to help you reach your Peak Performance!

Ph: 401-726-7100 or 401-435-4540

6 Convenient Rhode Island Locations

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