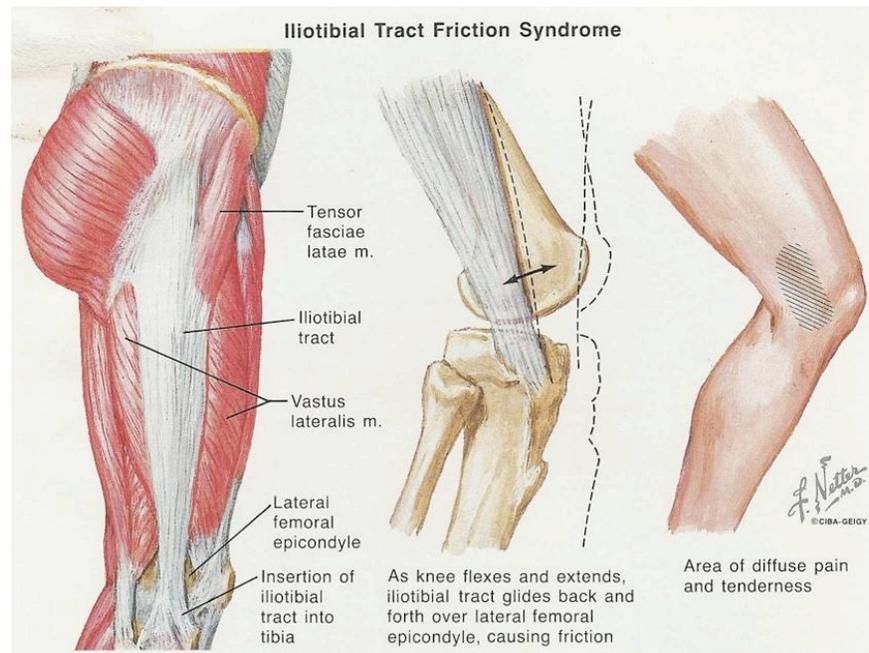


Dr. Victor J. Runco  
4760-C Mission Gorge Place  
San Diego, CA 92120  
(619) 265-2222



## Iliotibial Band Syndrome (ITB)



### What is it?

**Iliotibial Band Syndrome or ITB** is a common diagnosis given to runners suffering from pain on the outside (lateral) portion of their knee that feels sharp and stabbing when they run. It generally begins later in a run and quickly progresses to the point that it prevents running at all.

### How did I get it?

There are many anatomical factors that contribute to the development of

*Iliotibial Band Syndrome*. Bowed legs, excessive internal rotation of the lower leg, pelvic muscle imbalances, leg length differences and overpronation are some of the most common. Overpronation causes excessive internal rotation of the lower leg causing excessive repetitive strain on the outside of the knee, and is one of the most common reasons a runner develops the condition.

**Custom Orthotics:** A proper foot orthotic can go a long way in taking the stress off of your knee and your **Iliotibial Band**. The right custom-made, biomechanical orthotic can address the underlying cause of your knee pain. Abnormal joint position, overpronation or foot rigidity can be addressed and the biomechanics normalized. San Diego Running Institute orthotics are custom molded to your foot and designed with your specific body weight and activity in mind. The restoration of correct mechanical function takes the abnormal stress off the knee and Iliotibial Band allowing it to heal.

**Stretching/Strengthening:** We are often told by runners that they have been stretching in an attempt to relieve pain associated with **Iliotibial Band Syndrome**. The stretching exercise is directed at lengthening the tendon. The problem is that **Iliotibial Band Syndrome** is not a "stretching deficiency." In fact, there are no safe, effective ways to stretch the **Iliotibial Band** at the knee. Strengthening of certain muscles may be effective but it is important to remember that it takes 4-6 weeks before muscles begin to strengthen in response to training. In fact, anyone who has worked out in a gym can tell you that if you stop strengthening muscles they begin to shrink, lose strength and atrophy within two weeks!

**Rest:** For many rest is not a realistic option, the race you are training for is looming. Our bodies are wonderful "machines." If you rest long enough it will heal itself. How long? This is uncertain. If you rest too long you may not be able to achieve your goal. If you do not rest long enough the injury may not heal. There are devices such as the **Pro-Tech Iliotibial Band brace** that sometimes allows a runner to continue training by decreasing stress at the **Iliotibial Band**.

**Drugs/Anti-inflammatory:** Drugs such as Ibuprofen are anti-inflammatory agents not **healing** agents. They actually impair the healing process and many times allow a runner to injure themselves further. Studies have shown that these medications are harmful to your body that can cause ulcers and strain your liver.

**Ice:** Ice is often recommended and is another example of a non-healing modality. A runner often reports that they have been icing their knee after running. Doing this may help with the pain and inflammation at the moment but how will it help to remove the abnormal stress that is occurring at your **Iliotibial band** and knee? It won't. What it will allow you to do is further injure your knee, resulting in permanent damage. Addressing the underlying biomechanical cause prevents further damage from occurring and allows you to complete your goal injury free.

**Steroid Injections:** Steroid injections are extremely painful and most doctors are reluctant to inject the **Iliotibial Band** anyway. The Plantar fascia is structurally similar to the Iliotibial Band. Recent research has shown that in the majority of patients with plantar fasciitis the tissue is not inflamed but **scarred**. During the initial injury, inflammation was present but inflammation only last up to seventy-two hours, then scarring takes place. Steroid injections have also been shown to increase the chance of rupture of the plantar fascia. Since the plantar fascia is similar in structure to the **Iliotibial Band** it is not a good idea to inject it either.

**How long will it take to heal?** This depends on how long you have been suffering from **Iliotibial Band Syndrome**. By correcting the underlying cause of the injury with San Diego Running Institute orthotics, and following the treatment regimen provided by Dr. Runco you can expect 50-100% relief usually within two weeks. Ask your San Diego Running Institute expert about how to fix your **Iliotibial Band Syndrome** today.

For a complete diagnostic exam,  
or more information contact:

Dr. Victor J. Runco  
619-265-2222

