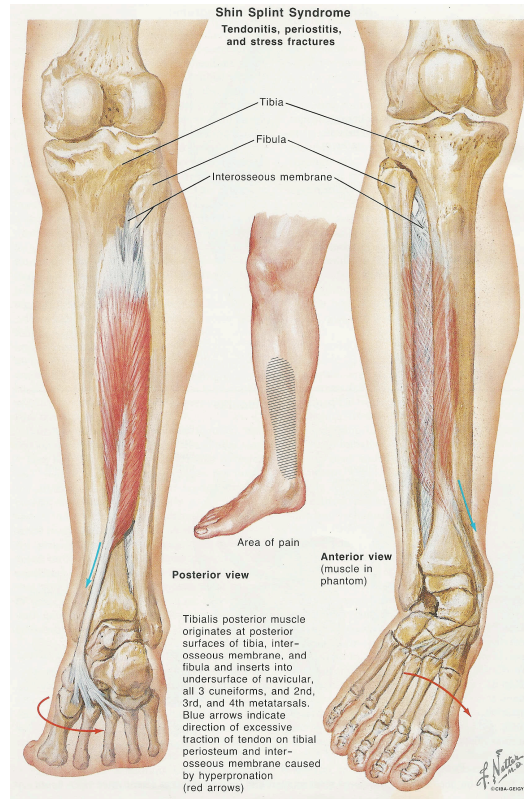


Dr. Victor J. Runco
4760-C Mission Gorge Place
San Diego, CA 92120
(619) 265-2222



Shin Splints



What is it?

Shin Splints is a common diagnosis given to runners suffering from pain either in the front (anterior) portion of their legs or in the inside (medial) portion of their legs.

Shin Splints are an irritation of bone or muscle tissue due to excessive impact from repetitive stress on the shin bone or overuse of the muscle beneath your calf called the Posterior Tibialis. If not treated properly **Shin Splints** can progress to inflammation of your shin bone (Periostitis) or stress fractures. Stress fractures cannot usually be seen on X-ray and can only be visually detected by MRI.

How did I get it?

There are two anatomical factors that contribute to the development of **Shin Splints**.

Flat, hyper mobile feet cause over-pronation, excessive stretching, and pulling of the Posterior Tibialis tendon. Thus causing micro tears to the muscle that runs down the inside of your shin.

High arched, rigid feet do not flex well and do not dissipate shock. This causes contusions to the shin bone, resulting in Periostitis and stress fractures.

How is it treated?

There are many ways that ***Shin Splints*** can be treated. What is important is that the right treatment is provided for the correct diagnosis.

Custom Orthotics: A proper foot orthotic can go a long way in taking the stress off of your shin bones and your Posterior Tibialis tendon. The right custom-made, biomechanical orthotic can address the underlying cause of your shin 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 shins and allows them to heal.

Stretching: Often we are told by runners that they have been stretching in an attempt to help ***Shin Splints***. The stretching exercise is directed at lengthening the tendon. The problem is that shin splints are not a "stretching deficiency." In fact there are really no safe, effective ways to stretch the Posterior Tibialis anyway, and if it is your bone that is suffering how could you stretch that? Strengthening of certain muscles may be effective but it is important to remember, it takes 4-6 weeks before muscles begin to strengthen in response to training. In addition anyone who has worked out in a gym can tell you that if you stop strengthening muscles they begin to lose strength and shrink within two weeks!

Rest: For many runners rest is not a realistic option, the race you are training for is looming. Our body is a wonderful "machine," if you rest it long enough it will heal itself. How long? This is uncertain. Some patients report that they rested for weeks/months and still cannot run or walk without pain. Rest cannot fix faulty biomechanics.

Drugs/Anti-inflammatories: Drugs such as Ibuprofen & Motrin are anti-inflammatory agents **not** healing agents. They actually impair the healing process and many times allow the runner to injure themselves further. Studies have proven that these medications are harmful to your body, can damage your kidneys 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 leg/shin after running. This may help with the pain at the moment but how will it help to remove the abnormal stress that is occurring in your shins? It won't. What it will allow you to do is further damage your shins eventually resulting in fractures or permanent damage. Addressing the underlying biomechanical cause prevents further damage from occurring and allows you to complete your goal/race injury free.

Steroid Injections: This option is extremely painful and most doctors are reluctant to inject the shins anyway. Steroid injections have also been shown to increase the chance of tendon rupture.

How long will it take to heal? This depends on how long you have been suffering from ***Shin Splints***. By correcting the cause of the injury with San Diego Running Institute orthotics and following a treatment regimen provided by Dr. Runco you can expect 50-75% relief usually within two weeks. Ask your San Diego Running Institute expert about how to fix your ***Shin splints*** today.

For a complete diagnostic exam
or more information contact:

Dr. Victor J. Runco
619-265-2222

