

Fact Sheet

Shin Splints / Shin Pain

What is Shin Pain?

Shin pain is a common injury in many running based sports, e.g. basketball, netball, football. It is characterised by pain in and around the tibia (shin bone) in the lower leg and usually occurs as a result of a sudden increase in the frequency, duration and/or intensity of activity.

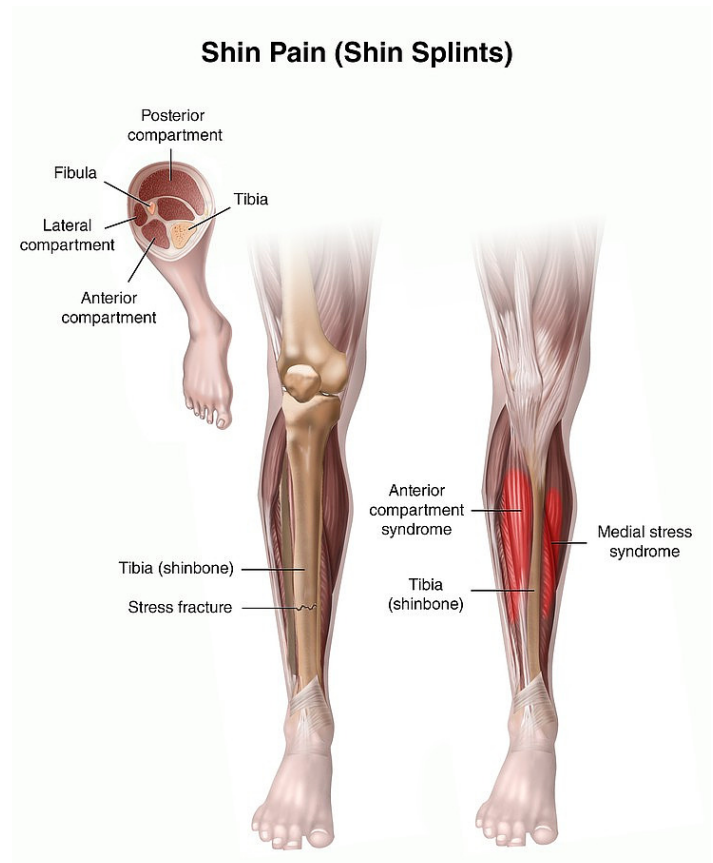
There are three main types of shin pain:

- Medial Tibial Stress Syndrome
- Stress Fracture
- Compartment Syndrome

Causes

Like most overuse injuries, shin pain may develop gradually over a period of time. Often the early signs are ignored with those continuing the activities causing the problem. Some of the causes may include:

- Abnormal biomechanics - overpronation, tibial malalignment e.g. bowed legs.
- Training methods - rapid increase in the intensity, duration or frequency of exercise.
- Training surfaces - running on hard surfaces or uneven ground.
- Footwear - wearing inappropriate footwear for the activity or worn out shoes.
- Poor flexibility, muscle imbalance or inadequate strength affecting muscles of the lower limb.



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Treatment

Early treatment of shin pain can make a significant difference and can prevent the problem before it becomes severe.

The immediate treatment of any soft tissue injury consists of the RICER protocol - rest, ice, compression, elevation and referral. RICE protocol should be followed for 48 - 72 hours. The aim is to reduce the bleeding and damage within the joint.

The No HARM protocol should also be applied - no heat, no alcohol, no running or activity, and no massage. This will ensure decreased bleeding and swelling in the injured area.

Depending on the diagnosis, treatment management may include:

- Pain relieving techniques
- Correction of biomechanical issues
- Specific stretches for flexibility
- a specific strength and muscle conditioning program

To keep fit while experiencing shin pain, participate in low impact activities such as swimming, cycling and deep-water running.



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ALWAYS CONSULT A TRAINED PROFESSIONAL

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