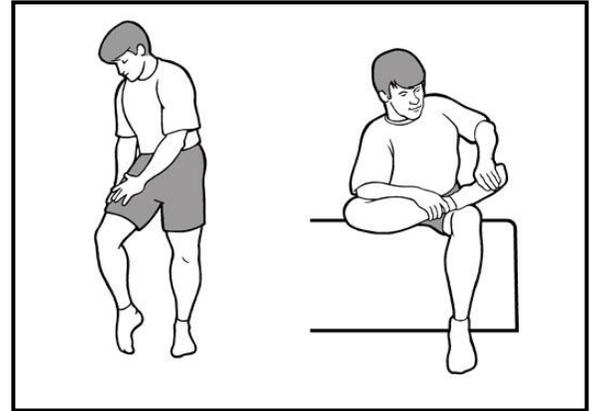


Daniel Fulham O'Neill, M.D., Ed.D, F.A.A.O.S.
Board Certified Orthopaedic Surgeon & Sports Psychologist

12 Yeaton Road, Suite C4 Box #12 Plymouth, NH 03264
Tel: 603 536 2270 Fax: 603 536 2277

SHIN SPLINTS

The term "Shin Splints" has been used to describe many different pains of the lower leg. There are different versions of shin splints and each may have different causes and treatments. "Tibial Stress Syndrome," the most common type, is more descriptive and is preferred over shin splints when describing shin pain. Some of the causes include muscle imbalance, over training, poor training, hard surfaces, poor supporting footwear, and flat feet.



Warm-up: Get your heart rate elevated by doing some push-ups, sit-ups, or a lower extremity warm-up that does not aggravate your shins.

Stretch: Stretch until you feel mild tension and hold for 15-30 seconds. You are not bound to the examples we have provided, be creative and find the stretches that best suit your needs.

Exercises: See separate lower-leg handout.

Massage: Sitting in a chair or with your legs elevated, massage the involved muscles. Work from your toes toward your heart.

Ice & Massage: Ice 20 minutes at a time 2-4 times a day. This is especially helpful before and after activity. A frozen bag of veggies or a gel pack are nice to use because they will conform to your leg. A Dixie cup with water, frozen, can also be used to massage the sore area. Peel off the top of the cup to expose the ice & start massaging up and down your shin for up to 10 minutes.

Arch support / Non-custom insoles: It is always a good idea to wear a supportive shoe- especially for aggressive activity. Spenco, Dr. Scholl's, & Super feet are just a few of the brands that make full length insoles. These provide much more support than the standard-issue insole. A good shoe store or ski shop can also help get you set-up. **Note:** In some cases custom orthotics are required. These can be expensive, but if they help, they will be well worth your investment.

Immobilization: Sever cases require the use of a pneumatic walker in order to rest the irritated structures. This will depend on your progress with the above modalities.