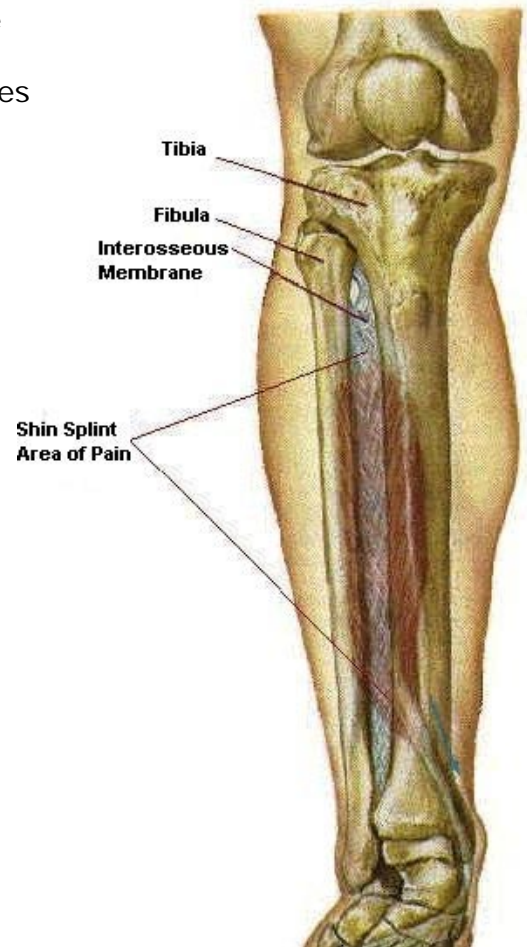


Shin Splints

The term shin splints is used to describe pain at the front of the lower leg on the shinbone or tibia.

It is caused when the connective tissue that attaches the muscles to the bone gets inflamed and painful. Depending on where in the lower leg the pain and inflammation occur, it can also be called medial tibial stress syndrome (MTSS).

Shin splints are a type of over-use injury of the legs and occur most often in runners and aggressive walkers.



What causes shin splints?

- Overtraining
- Increasing the intensity of workouts too quickly
- Poor warm-up
- Excessive pronation of the foot
- Tight posterior leg muscles
- Jumping or running on hard surfaces
- Muscle imbalance between the front and back of the legs
- Worn out footwear
- Running on slanted surfaces

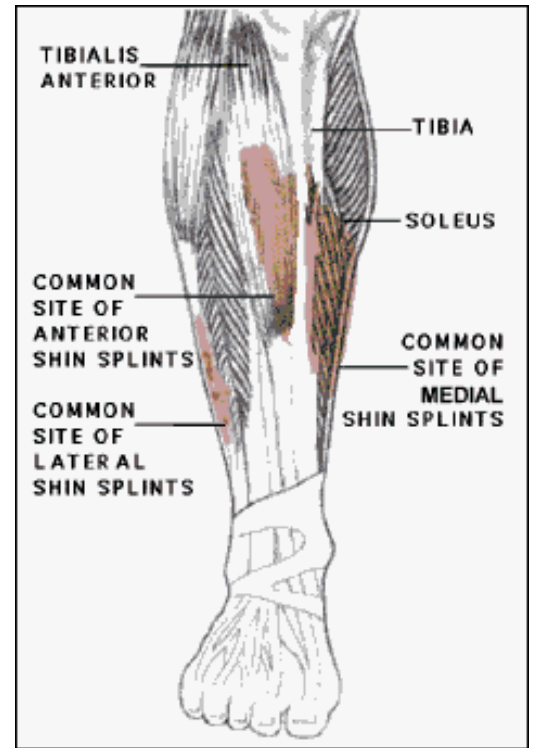


Usual Symptoms of Shin Splints

- Pain over the medial or inside of the shin
- Pain appears at the start of exercise, then lessens and reappears at the end of the workout.
- Pain that is aggravated with running or weight bearing exercises
- Pain when the foot or toes are pointed downwards
- Pain that is initially dull, but can become severe enough to stop activity.
- An aching pain that lingers after the activity has finished
- Swelling is sometimes present
- You may feel lumps and bumps over the shin bone
- The shin may be red and inflamed

What can you do to help?

- Rest and allow the injury to heal
- Ice to decrease the inflammation
- Stretch tight muscles
- Wear shock-absorbing insoles
- Wear a shin or calf support. This will add support and compression to the lower leg and reduce the strain on the muscles.



What can Physiotherapy do to help?

- We use pain modalities such as ultrasound, interferential and acupuncture to relieve pain and inflammation and to promote healing.
- We assess for any muscle imbalances and give appropriate corrective exercises
- We advise you about orthotics and footwear.
- We devise an exercise program to keep you active without aggravating your injury
- We give you advice about injury prevention.
- We help you plan a gradual return to running activities.
- We can book a running assessment to make sure your technique is not causing a problem.



Sport Medicine Physician

Your sports medicine physician can help diagnose shin splints. They can also order tests such as x-rays, MRIs and bone scans. These tests are performed to find additional information and to rule out the possibility of a tibial stress fracture or compartment syndrome. If you are not improving with physiotherapy, your sport medicine physician can prescribe anti-inflammatory medications if they think these would be appropriate.