

Injury Prevention

The 10-Percent Rule

The 10-Percent Rule states that you should never increase your weekly mileage by more than 10 percent over the previous week. By following this rule, you will ensure that the increase in your mileage is consistent and gradual. For example, jumping straight from 7 miles to 11 miles is a mistake. Do 8 or 9 miles instead.

Stretch Regularly

Lack of stretching or improper stretching can lead to running injuries. Stretching is an important complementary aspect of any running program. We know that running creates stress on certain muscle groups. Soon after you stop running, muscles that have been stressed begin to tighten. The best way to avoid stiffness and eventual soreness from stressed, tightening muscles is to stretch or find another activity like yoga or pilates that will achieve the same result. Holding each stretch for more than **30 seconds** at a comfortable tension is key to good stretching. You should not feel pain while stretching. Do this at least twice a week and you will be on your way to running injury free!!!

Proper Shoes

Having proper running shoes could be the difference between being injured or running healthy. Have someone knowledgeable do a foot assessment to ensure you have the proper support and cushion in your shoe. Each company has a spectrum of shoes ranging from neutral to motion control. Depending on how much a person supponates (rolls out) or pronates (rolls in) will determine which shoe is right for them.

Ice

Ice is your best friend!!! If you have an ache or pain that is bothering you, it cannot hurt to ice the area using an ice pack or cup. With an ice pack, ensure you have a small layer between your skin and the pack to avoid frost bite. Some ice packs already come with a fabric on them. Ice the affected area for around 15min to move the inflammation out. If you are using an ice cup, 7-10 min is enough making sure you are constantly moving the ice on the sore area.

Massage/Physiotherapist

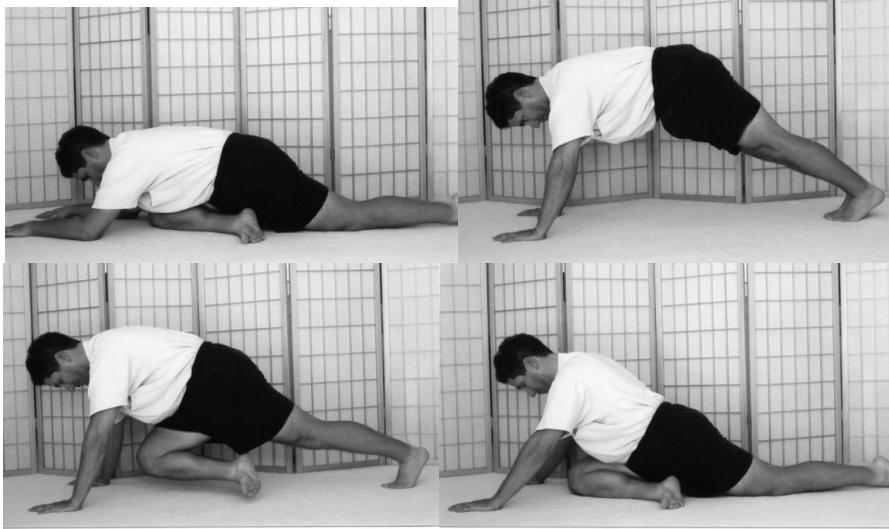
Find a physiotherapist, chiropractor, or massage therapist who you can trust and get regular treatment if needed. Massage every 2-3 weeks is recommended if you are building towards a race. As the training gets more intense, massage can help with minor strains and muscle tightness.

Iliotibial Band Syndrome

Iliotibial Band Syndrome is inflammation and pain on the outer thigh from the knee to the hip. The iliotibial band is a thick ligament that runs from the pelvis to the outside of the thigh connecting just below the knee. It stabilizes your thigh muscles and knee when you run.

Causes of Iliotibial band syndrome are bowlegged ness, overpronation, worn-out running shoes, running on uneven surfaces, and excessive downhill running.

Treatment for iliotibial band syndrome includes backing off run mileage, taking anti-inflammatory drugs, and icing it often. Specific prevention tactics are to increase the band's flexibility through stretching and running on even surfaces.



Shin Splints

Shin splints are tiny tears of the front lower leg muscles away from the shin bone and are one of the most common running injuries for beginner runners.

Shin splints are caused by tired or inflexible calf muscles, weak shins, over striding, overpronation and running on hard surfaces such as concrete sidewalks.

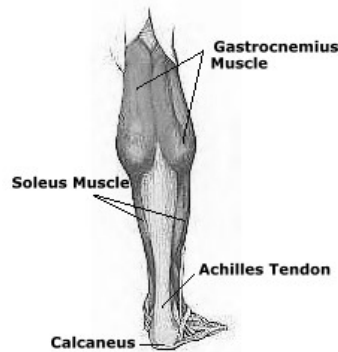
The best treatment for shin splints is to ice the inflamed area, take anti-inflammatory medication, cut back on run mileage, run on soft, forgiving surfaces whenever possible, and to wear a shin brace that takes the pressure off your shins.



Achilles Tendonitis

The Achilles tendon is the largest and strongest tendon in the body. Achilles tendonitis is a painful inflammation of the Achilles tendon. This large tendon is an extension of the two calf muscles and runs down the back of the lower leg and attaches to the heel bone. The Achilles tendon connects the strong leg muscles to the foot and gives us the ability to rise up on our toes, facilitating the act of walking and running.

Achilles tendonitis is caused by many of the same things that lead to plantar faciitis as well as overpronation, tight calf muscles, and shoes that fit too high against your heel.



Plantar Fasciitis/Heel and Arch Pain

Plantar Fasciitis is an inflammation of the plantar fascia, a fibrous band of tissue that runs from the heel to the toes. Pain is felt along the inside bottom of your foot anywhere from the heel through the arch.

The plantar fascia typically becomes inflamed when it works through more of a range of motion than it's designed to do. Runners with tight Achilles tendons, who overpronate, have high arches, have rigid feet, and inflexible running shoes are most likely to suffer with Plantar Fasciitis.

The best treatment for Plantar Fasciitis is to ice the bottom of your foot from heel to ball and to make sure that your shoes have the proper combination of motion control and cushioning. Freezing a tennis ball and rolling your foot on top, as well as working on calf flexibility are great methods for alleviating plantar faciitis pain.

