

SHIN SPLINTS (MEDIAL TIBIAL STRESS SYNDROME)



This condition is a painful swelling, usually along the front of the lower leg, that is common among runners and other athletes.

Causes

Shin splints are usually caused by overuse of the leg muscles, particularly the anterior tibialis, a muscle that runs along the front of the tibia. This muscle can become stretched, gradually tearing away the connective tissue that attaches it to the tibia. Shin splints are common in athletes that run on hard or angled surfaces, or in those who wear shoes with hard soles or poor padding.

Symptoms

Dull, aching pain along the front or inside edge of the lower leg is the most common symptom of shin splints. Redness and swelling may also occur, and pain may increase with activity and decrease with rest.

Treatment

Treatment options include rest, cold compress, elevating the leg, anti-inflammatory medications, physical therapy, cross training, use of a shoe with proper padding and arch support, or use of a brace. Severe cases may require surgery.

