

Shin Splints/Shin Pain

What are shin splints?

The term shin splints is often used to describe generalised pain during or after activity in the lower leg region.

There are usually three pathological processes:

1. **Bone stress** - continuum of increased bone damage exists from bone strain to stress reaction to stress fracture.
2. **Inflammation** – develops at the insertion of muscles, particularly tibialis posterior, tibialis anterior and soleus, and fascia to the medial border of the tibia.
3. **Raised intracompartment pressure** – the lower leg has a number of muscle compartments, each enveloped by a thick inelastic fascia. As a result of overuse/inflammation the muscle compartments may become swollen and painful.

What are some of the causes of shin splints?

- Excessive rolling in of the feet (excessive pronation)
- Rigid high arched foot (poor shock absorption)
- Muscle imbalance between posterior and anterior lower leg muscles
- Playing sport on hard surfaces
- Poor conditioning for level of activity
- Over training
- Incorrect, inadequate or worn out footwear

What is the treatment for shin splints?

- Activity modification
- Ice
- Anti-inflammatory medication
- Foot strapping
- Footwear review/recommendation
- Orthotics
- Stretching/strengthening exercises
- Physical therapy

