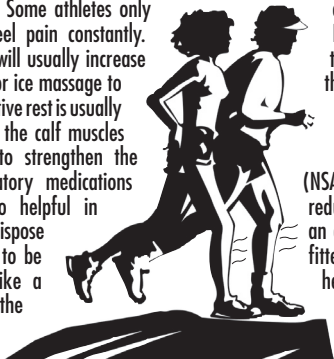


TRAINING TIP OF THE WEEK

SHIN SPLINTS

One of the more common injuries in athletics is shin splints, accounting for almost 15% of all injuries in runners. Even though it is commonly used, shin splint is not a specific diagnosis and is incorrectly used interchangeably with Medial Tibial Stress Syndrome (MTTS), the most common cause of shin pain. MTTS is an overuse injury to the tendons and their attachment on the tibia (shin bone). Symptoms include a dull achy pain on the inside of the tibia. Some athletes only experience pain with exercise, others feel pain constantly. Pressing the foot down against resistance will usually increase the symptoms. Treatment includes ice packs or ice massage to the shins daily, especially after exercise. Relative rest is needed for a short period, and is also very important. Stretching the calf muscles and exercises to strengthen the muscles of the lower leg. Anti-inflammatory medications (NSAIDS) such as Ibuprofen or Aleve are also helpful in reducing pain. Certain running gaits predispose an athlete to this injury so it may be necessary to be fitted with orthotics or use special footwear like a heel cushion. To prevent shin problems, use footwear that is increased the intensity and duration of your training. Make sure you are wearing proper footwear that is replaced regularly (about every 300 miles) and avoid running on hard surfaces such as concrete whenever possible. Don't ignore the pain if it persists or worsens in intensity because it could mean you have a more serious injury like a stress fracture.



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