

## **Top 5 ways to Avoid Shin Splints and other injuries!!!**

1. Stay OFF ASPHALT; CEMENT (parking lots or sidewalks etc) as much as you can. Don't join programs that tell you that the cement won't hurt you!
2. Increasing your running 10% (slowly)
3. Listen to your body it will tell you when you need to walk.
4. If you have shin or ankle weakness, change up your cardio on your off days OFF YOUR FEET. No walking, running replace with swimming, biking, cycling, or boxing.
5. GET GOOD SHOES. Retire your shoes after 500 miles. Only wear your running shoes when you are working out/running not all day at the mall and chasing the kids.

### **How can I avoid shin splints?**

As reported in Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise, very few studies have looked at ways to prevent shin splints. In the absence of scientific evidence, runners will have to rely on good old common sense. Clearly, being reasonable in the way you exercise is one of the best defenses against shin splints. The American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons recommends that you stretch and warm up for five minutes before going for a run. If you want to improve your conditioning, increase your distances gradually. As your legs get stronger, they can withstand more abuse -- although it's always good not to overdo it.

Proper shoes can save you a lot of pain. Choose a pair that provides plenty of support and cushioning. According to a report from Rice University, shoes lose 30 percent to 40 percent of their shock-absorbing ability after 500 miles of use. Even if the tread still looks fine, shoes with that much mileage should be retired. A shock-absorbent insole can be a valuable addition to any shoe.

Also, you might want to try running on a softer surface, like grass, turf or track surface, especially in the first few workouts after taking some time off to rest your legs. (Your knees will thank you, too.) Stay OFF ASPHALT; CEMENT (parking lots or sidewalks etc) as much as you can. Don't join programs that tell you that the cement won't hurt you!

Shin splints are likely to occur when runners start to increase their mileage -- say, from one or two miles a day to three or four miles a day. It's a good idea to follow the "10 percent rule," or boosting your activity level 10 percent at a time. If you normally jog one mile, for example, begin by increasing that to one-and-one-tenth miles rather than four. If you haven't been exercising much lately, it's only natural to want to make up for lost time. But remember: It's hard to stay in shape when your shins are screaming. Keep your goals realistic, keep your shoes in good shape, and keep your shins happy.

Part of this article comes from -- Chris Woolston, MS, is a health and medical writer with a master's degree in biology. He is a contributing editor at Consumer Health Interactive, and was the staff writer at Hippocrates, a magazine for physicians. He has also covered science issues for Time Inc. Health, WebMD, and the Chronicle of Higher Education.

### **Is there a common trend to running injuries and the shoes you wear?**

According to Joe Ellis and Joe Henderson, you can find shoes that are likely to alleviate your running pains if you are knowledgeable about your biomechanics. This article will examine seven different injuries and how symptoms can be reduced through purchasing the right running shoe. These injuries include; hip, knee and metatarsal pains, shin splints, Achilles tendonitis, chronic ankle sprains, plantar fasciitis and heel-spur syndrome.

Let's begin with hip pain. The pain in the hip is generally on the outside of the hip area. These symptoms can be reduced with better shock absorption, or a soft midsole and slip lasting. Controlling pronation is not a concern for hip pain.

Knee pain, the most common pain in recent research, can be on the lateral or medial side of the knee. To decrease lateral pain, a shoe with motion control properties is needed. Dual-density (eva 2) midsole material on the medial side of the shoe, accompanied with a combination last (board in the heel) is the best for controlling motion. If medial knee pain exists, then the opposite is true. Selecting a shoe with a soft midsole and/or purchasing a cushioned insert to absorb shock will decrease these symptoms.

If you are suffering from shin splints, first try to increase the strength on the front and inside of your legs. Too much pronation may cause a muscular or tendon strain. A doctor should examine this. A shoe with moderate pronation control may help, but the shoe should also have cushioning and be flexible. Try a stability shoe, or a cushioned shoe built for someone weighing over 180. An over-the-counter cushioned insert will also help absorb shock.

If you feel that you are suffering from Achilles tendonitis, your calf muscle is probably too tight and doing too much work. Try a stability shoe, built for over-pronators. A shoe such as the New Balance 900 series that lifts the heel slightly will help take pressure off the irritated tendon. You may also try to use a heel cup. Stay away from inflexible shoes that use a chamber cushioning system to allow for flow of air from the front to the rear of the shoe. This causes inflexibility in most shoes.

If you are cursed with chronic ankle sprains, you may have too much motion at the ankle joint, caused from weak ankles or previously injured ligaments that are stretched out. Try to strengthen your ankles through exercises such as drawing the alphabet with a free foot, rotating at the ankle joint. A shoe that offers stability and a firm midsole, will give the best support.

Plantar fasciitis and heel-spur syndrome causes pain under your heel, through the arch and sometimes into the ball of your foot when the plantar fascia is strained. If the pull is not taken care, it can lead to a bone spur to form under the heel. Shoes for pronation, such as stability or motion control will offer support, but may not stop pain. An over the counter insert with arch support also may be needed, along with time off from running.

Metatarsal pains are caused from excessive impact on the ball of the foot and can lead to metatarsal stress fractures, and other symptoms around the ball of your foot. A very flexible shoe with a slip last and a soft midsole, should help take pressure off this area. Also, consider forefoot cushioning as another option.

If pain persists after implementing these tips, visit a doctor, or make running shoe clinic appointment..

"One of the biggest problems I see with new runners is they're trying to do it in basketball shoes and stuff like that," Carpenter says. "You have to have good shoes. And you do have to go ahead and sink some money into it." A good pair of running shoes generally will cost about \$60 to \$120. What shoe is best for you depends on your weight, your gait and other factors. Carpenter looks for a flexible, light shoe. "But that just doesn't work for everyone and, in fact, can get some people hurt."

Go to a store that specializes in running shoes, or at least athletic shoes, and find a salesperson who really knows those shoes, Cotton suggests. Once you get your shoes, use them only for running. "Walking around on them all day long reduces their shock absorbency."

"Most of the problems don't come from picking the wrong shoe," Carpenter says. It's from people having the right shoe and trying to wear it too long." A good running shoe should last about 300 miles or so, but may break down quicker, depending on the runner's weight and gait. When wrinkles develop in the side of the shoe's midsole, that's a good sign you need a new pair, Carpenter says.