



Running & Iliotibial Band Syndrome

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Are you a runner? Do you run pain free?

If not, you may be experiencing iliotibial band syndrome (ITB syndrome). While this injury can affect many different people, it is most common to runners. Pain is usually felt on the outside part of the knee or the lower thigh, which is made worse by running, going up and down stairs, or getting out of a car.

The IT band is a tough group of fibers (composed of connective tissue also known as fascia) that run along the outside of the thigh. It originates at the top of the hip and ends at the outside of the knee (tibia). The IT band functions as a stabilizer during running and can become irritated from overuse.

Rubbing of the IT band over the outer aspect of the knee can cause inflammation and pain which may be felt at the outer knee or outer thigh. Pain can worsen after running (especially on hills or stairs).

Possible Causes of ITB Syndrome

- running on uneven roads or tight indoor tracks
- worn out running shoes or improper running shoes
- foot pronation
- overuse/over training
- tight buttock or thigh muscles
- increasing training intensity too quickly (too much too fast)
- cycling
- prolonged sitting
- postural imbalances of the pelvis or leg

IT band syndrome is best treated with massage therapy before it becomes chronic. Massage can help increase the length of the IT band using myofascial techniques which can restore any lost range of motion. Trigger point therapy and deep tissue massage is needed to reduce any adhering that is present and will decrease any increased tension, especially in the buttocks and hip.

Self Care involves icing the lateral knee, to decrease any pain and inflammation; and stretching the IT band, buttocks and hip. Prevention is the key. It is essential to stretch, avoid hard workouts on hills, and always ease into any running program.