

Sports Medicine

'Shin Splint' Prevention Routine

(Medial Tibial Stress Syndrome)

Introduction

This program is designed to minimize the risk of medial tibial stress syndrome, and other overuse injuries associated with track and field training and competition. It can be implemented in about 15 minutes and no equipment is necessary. The specific exercises and stretches in this program were selected for their ability to target key areas where weakness or restriction may increase the risk of overuse injury. These exercises and stretches can be used in conjunction with current warm-up and stretching routines. They are not designed to replace current routines, only to serve as a supplement.

Lower Leg Strengthening and Proprioception

Toe Walk x25 meters

Walk on toes and ball of the foot only for 25 meters. Walk slowly and under control, emphasizing balance.

Heel Walk x25 meters

Walk on heel only for 25 meters. Walk slowly and under control, emphasizing balance.

Double Leg Heel Raises 2x20

Slowly raise yourself from standing flat to on the toes, with your heels off the ground. Lower slowly and under control, emphasizing balance. Repeat for 2 sets of 20 repetitions. This exercise can be progressed by standing on a single leg.

Weight Shift on toes 2x20

Stand on toes and ball of the feet only and shift weight from the inside of the feet, near the big toe,

to the outside of the feet, near the small toe. Rock from inside to outside of the feet slowly and under control, emphasizing balance. Repeat for 2 sets of 20 repetitions.

Lower Leg Flexibility

Gastroc/Soleus Stretch 2x30 seconds

With both hands on the ground and one foot down, push your weight back trying to touch the heel to the ground. Do this stretch with knee fully extended, followed by the knee bent. Repeat for 2 sets of 30 seconds.

Tibialis Anterior Stretch 2x30 seconds

This stretch has three variations; each one requires more flexibility than the previous. Only one variation should be done in each session, progressing as flexibility improves.

1. Place top of the foot on an elevated surface behind you. Push your weight down so that the top of the foot is pulled away from the shin.
2. Standing on a single leg, bring the foot toward the rear. Grab the top of the foot near the toes and pull the foot away from the shin. In the stretch position the knee should point down, and the toes should point up.
3. Start kneeling with the top of the feet on the ground, toes point back, knees pointing forward. Slowly sit back on the soles of the feet.



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Hip Flexibility

Hip Flexor Stretch 2x30 seconds

Begin in a deep lunge position and shift the weight forward until a stretch is felt in the front of the hip. Hold this position for 2 sets of 30 seconds on each side.

Hamstring Stretch 2x30 seconds

Seated, with legs forward and knees fully extended, reach for the toes until a stretch is felt in the back of the thighs. Hold this position for 2 sets of 30 seconds.

I.T. Band Stretch 2x30 seconds

This stretch can be done seated or standing.

Seated - Sit with the R leg extended. Bend the L knee and cross it over the extended R leg. Rotate the torso so that the R elbow is outside the L knee.

Hold this position for 2 sets of 30 seconds, then reverse for an additional 2 sets of 30 seconds.

Standing - Bring the L leg behind the R. Lean the body to the R stretching the outside of the L hip. Reach the L arm over head to increase the stretch. Hold this position for 2 sets of 30 seconds, then reverse for an additional 2 sets of 30 seconds.

Adductor Stretch 2x30 seconds

Sit with the knees bent and the soles of the feet together. Lower the knees toward the ground until a stretch is felt on the inside of the thighs. Hold this position for 2 x 30 seconds sets of 30 seconds.

