



CAPE COD SPORTS MEDICINE INC.

ORTHOPEDIC SURGEON

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Running & Jogging Injuries (Part 3)

In this last of the series, injuries to the back, hip, thigh and lower extremity will be examined as they relate to runners. Back injuries are relatively uncommon in runners since shoe modifications improved the shock absorbing capacity of the modern running shoe. Lower Back Pain is usually from a lumbosacral strain or microtearing of back muscles. Intense muscle spasms can produce extreme pain and tenderness in the lower back. Treatment is a short period of rest followed by early mobilization and stretching exercises. Ice for the first 48-72 hours will reduce inflammation. Sciatica is an irritation of the sciatic nerve which produces radiating pain down one leg. The pain predominates in the buttocks and not the spine. If the pain radiated below the knee joint, this may indicate a herniated disc (slipped disc) in the lower back and should be evaluated by your physician.

Strains, sprains and bursitis usually characterize running injuries about the hip and pelvis. Greater Trochanteric Bursitis is pain directly over the hipbone. This pain is usually worse after a run. Night pain from rolling onto that hip bursa is common. A tight ileotibial band (ITB) and tensor fascia lata microtears causes the condition. Treatment consists of icing, anti-inflammatory medications and ITB stretching exercises. Occasionally, a steroid injection into the swollen bursa is required to reverse the process. Hamstring strains are common overuse injuries. The lateral hamstring and the ileotibial band can cause tendonitis about the knee region. ITB Tendonitis can develop into a chronic condition if not treated aggressively and early. Prolonged rest, ice followed by heat, stretching, and ultrasound treatments and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medicines are used for treatment.

Internal derangement of the knee consists of meniscal tears, collateral ligament strains and anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) ruptures. These injuries are characterized by swelling, pain, joint locking and giving way. They are caused by a twisting, hyperflexion injury usually from a fall while running. They almost always require arthroscopic surgery, but the post-op prognosis is quite good.

Shin splints or medial tibial stress syndrome is pain caused by an inflammation of the periosteum or lining of the lower leg bone where muscle & tendons originate. This is definitely associated with overuse, but in adolescents can be associated with the rapid growth phase of puberty. It gets better with rest and worse with activity. Ice, stretching, discontinuing running for 2-3 weeks, and sometimes a shoe insert (orthotic) is required to alleviate symptoms.