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Shin Splints Protocol

- A. Ice massage for 10 - 15 minutes before and after any exercise and whenever pain is present.
- B. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory (NSAID) medication as prescribed by physician.
- C. Professionally fitted orthotic or arch supports used for any weight bearing activity.
- D. Wear proper shoes for the activity. Old, poorly fitted or inappropriate types of shoes will increase the stress placed on the lower leg bones and muscles.
- E. Reduce the intensity and/or duration of activities that produce pain. Begin by decreasing the activity level by half and slowly progress or regress as pain level dictates.
- F. Change the location or type of surface where activities are performed. Avoid very soft or hard surfaces and change direction or course to decrease lower leg stress.
- G. Stretch the muscles of the lower leg 4 - 8 times daily, holding each stretch for 10 - 30 seconds, repeat each stretch 3 - 5 times per session.

1. **Dorsiflexion:** Stand 12" - 18" away from a wall with trunk and knees straight. Slowly lean into wall, keeping knees locked and heels on the floor. Slowly move heels away from wall as stretch becomes easier.



2. **Plantarflexion:** Point toes down as far as possible with knees straight. Progress by placing palm of opposite hand over the base of the toes and applying slow downward pressure on the foot.



3. **Inversion:** Turn ankle/foot inward as far as possible without moving lower leg. Progress by standing on outside edge of foot.



4. **Eversion:** Turn ankle/foot outward as far as possible without moving lower leg. Progress by standing on inside edge of foot.



H. Strengthening Exercises performed 1 - 3 times daily:

1. **Paper Pick-ups:** Crumple several pieces of 3"x3" paper into balls about the size of marbles. Place the balls of paper on the floor, using the toes, grasp one ball at a time, pick up and place in opposite hand. Repeat 20 - 40 times.

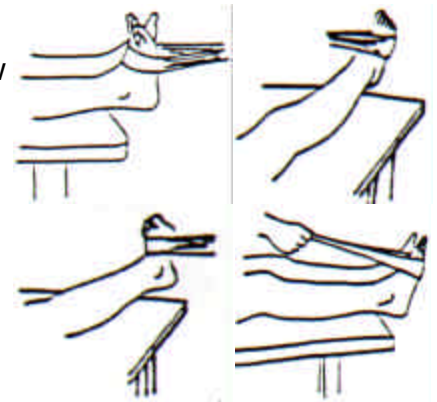


2. **Towel Push/Pull:** Lay out a towel on a smooth, slick surface and position the foot at one end. Curl toes to pull the towel toward the body without moving the heel. When the end of the towel is reached, use toes to push the towel away from the body. Progress by increasing repetitions or by adding a weight to the end of the towel.



3. **Theraband:** Using an this elastic band perform the following exercises to increase strength in the muscles of the affected ankle. Repeat 30 to 60 times one time daily.

- a. **Inversion:** Loop band over ball and instep of foot. Turn ankle & foot (not leg) inward as far as possible.
- b. **Eversion:** Loop band over outside edge of foot just below the toes. Turn ankle & foot (not leg) outward as far as possible.
- c. **Dorsiflexion:** Loop band over top of foot at base of toes. Pull foot and toes up toward shin as far as possible.
- d. **ABC's:** Loop band around ball and sole of foot while holding ends of the band. Write ABC's with, moving only foot and ankle, as in #1. Perform 1 to 2 sets of the alphabet one time daily.



4. **Calf Raises:** Stand with feet shoulder width apart and toes pointed forward. Left heels off of the floor as high as possible. Slowly lower heels to the floor and repeat as described below.



	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Monday - Tuesday	3 x 10	3 x 10	3 x 10	3 x 10
Wednesday - Thursday	3 x 15	3 x 15	3 x 15	3 x 15
Friday - Saturday	3 x 20	3 x 20	3 x 20	3 x 20
	Both Legs	2 Legs, Toes Elevated	1 Leg	1 Leg, Toes Elevated

5. **Backward Running:** Run backward raising knees up as high as possible and pushing off with the toes. Run 25 - 50 yards as tolerated. Emphasis should be on form, not speed.

- I. Continue this program for 2 weeks. If improvement is not experienced during that time, consult your physician, therapist, or Athletic Trainer. If the symptoms are becoming less severe, continue the program for 2 weeks after all symptoms have ceased in order to reduce the chance of recurrence.