



Take on These Tips for Preventing Shin Splints

The term “shin splints” just has something to it that sounds wholly unpleasant, and odds are pretty good you can get a runner to shudder just by saying it.

Shin splints, in general, refers to pain felt along the front of the lower leg, or your “shin bone.” It tends to be more common in runners and other participants in moderate to heavy activity—especially sports with a lot of starting and stopping, such as tennis and basketball. The pain often comes as a dull ache and will often develop or worsen while you’re active.

Activity can place a lot of force on the shins, and sometimes this results in injuries such as stress fractures and muscle strains. Keeping this cause in mind is one of the best first steps you can take toward preventing the problem from occurring.

Here are some general shin splint prevention tips:

- **Give your body recovery time.** Going hard on the track and court all day or not taking enough rest days in your routine can overload your body. Resting or cross-training gives your shins (and the rest of you) an opportunity to rebuild from stress damage and come back stronger than before.
- **Warm up and stretch properly.** Prolonged stress can hurt your shins, but so can the shock of sudden activity when your body isn’t ready for it. Light jogging and jumping exercises are a great warm-up, as well as any stretches that focus on the feet, ankles, Achilles, and calves.
- **Opt for softer surfaces.** If you can, stay off concrete and stick to dirt, clay, or softer gym surfaces. If you’re a street runner, consider hitting the treadmill once or twice per week instead to give your body a bit of a break.

We can provide additional help for shin splint treatment and prevention, including best choices for footwear and what specific exercises would be optimal for you. Just ask!



About the Doctor

Matt Wettstein, DPM

Advanced Foot and Ankle is led by Dr. Matt Wettstein. Originally from Logan, UT, Dr. Wettstein completed his undergraduate studies at Utah State University before attending Des Moines University in the College of Podiatric Medicine and Surgery. After graduating with top honors, he then completed his residency in Salt Lake City, UT. Dr. Wettstein is married and has four, wonderful, children.

Get Social w/Us





Know Your RICE When Injury Strikes

Rice is something you likely hear of often. It's a world-popular food staple, after all! But what do you know about "RICE" as it applies to treating a foot and ankle injury?

The RICE method is form of first aid when a painful sports injury strikes, such as an ankle sprain. It's an acronym that stands for:

- **Rest.** Take weight off the injured area as soon as you can. The more weight you continue to bear on the injury, the more likely you are to cause more or prolonged damage.
- **Ice.** Apply ice to the injured area for 15-20 minutes, several times per day, to help relieve pain and reduce swelling. Do not apply ice directly to skin (always wrap it in a thin towel or other barrier first) and always wait at least an hour between icing sessions. You don't want to hurt your skin from too much cold exposure.
- **Compress.** An ACE bandage or compression wrap around the area can also help reduce swelling. However, it's possible to constrict blood flow by wrapping too tightly. If you're not confident or comfortable with wrapping (or know someone who is), it's all right to skip this step.
- **Elevate.** Keeping the injured area above the level of your heart can assist circulation and (once again) help reduce swelling. For your foot or ankle, this can mean propping up on some pillows in bed, or simply reclining back in an easy chair.

RICE therapy is most effective when started as soon as possible, and for the first 48 hours after an injury. During that time, however, please give us a call! You often need more than RICE for the best recovery, and we can help you determine whether additional help is needed.

Stretch Out for Foot and Ankle Health!

Whether you are just starting to pick up a workout program or have been putting your muscles through their paces for some time, the importance of stretching before and after any type of active session can't be underestimated.

Our muscles—as well as the ligaments, tendons, and other tissues they are connected to—are not made to endure sudden forces all at once, without preparation. Going from a standstill to a blazing run, for example, will increase your risk of injury, especially in the feet and ankles. (Just ask anyone who felt their Achilles pop mid-sprint.)

A good warm-up takes just a few minutes and brings a ton of benefits. Not only are you less likely to hurt yourself, but you also just feel more ready to do your best!

Dynamic stretching is the key to warming up. Do not limit yourself only to stretches where you stand still, but focus on more movement as well. That includes some light jogging, "butt-kicks" and other moves to stretch your Achilles, calves, and feet. (Don't forget the rest of your body too, but hey—we're a podiatry practice!)

Cooling down is also important, as it gives your muscles time to gradually revert to a resting state. **Static stretching** can be more of a focus here, holding stretches and allowing yourself to wind down.

Would you like some advice on the best stretches to meet your needs? Please don't hesitate to ask us! We'll be happy to provide you with some recommendations to fit into an overall workout plan.





Gotta Sneeze? Don't Try to Hold It In!

Sneezing is one of the most natural bodily reactions we have. Everyone does it, and yet we sometimes try to approach one as if we're trying to conceal a crime against the public.

It's understandable why we often do it. You don't want to look sick in front of others (even if you're not actually ill), and you don't want to disrupt something that might be going on around you.

So, when that familiar tickle comes, we may contort our faces and try to hold it in—but then we're fighting against what this reaction actually does!

When you sneeze, your body is expelling irritants and other nasty things it does not want in you. This can range from allergens to infectious organisms.

If you quell your sneezes, these items are staying inside your body where they can do more harm than good.

And if you are sick and producing mucus, sneezing helps keep it moving out of your system as well. Stifling sneezes can cause mucus to build up and get forced back into the Eustachian tubes of your ears, which can cause further infection and problems.

And yes, your mother was right: don't try to plug your nose or hold your breath when you sneeze. Your lungs are putting tremendous force behind the reaction, and you really can hurt yourself if it's not guided out properly.

Always, of course, cover your nose and mouth when you sneeze. Your upper arm is a good place to direct your face. Then, wash your hands afterward! That's the perfectly considerate, human way to deal with a sneeze, so please be kind to others who are doing so.



Mediterranean- style Pan-fried Haddock

A crispy fish with a fantastic sauce. And it doesn't take that long to make, either!!

Ingredients

- 3 Haddock filets (can substitute cod)
- 2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1 egg, beaten
- 3 Tbsp. cooking oil
- Salt and black pepper
- 2 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- ½ yellow onion, chopped
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- ¼ c. white wine
- ¼ c. chicken stock
- ½ c. cherry tomatoes, cut in half
- ¼ c. Kalamata olives
- 1 Tbsp. capers
- 1 Tbsp. pepperoncini, chopped
- 1 Tbsp. fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 Tbsp. fresh basil, chopped

Preparation

- Season fish filets on both sides with salt and pepper, then coat with flour
- Heat up the cooking oil in a frying pan
- Coat the fish with the beaten egg wash on both sides
- Add fish to the pan and fry on each side until golden brown, 3-4 minutes per side
- In a separate pan, heat up the extra virgin olive oil
- Add chopped onions and cook for 2-3 minutes until they're translucent
- Add chopped garlic and cook an additional minute
- Add white wine and deglaze the pan
- Add tomatoes, olives, capers, and pepperoncini and cook for 2-3 more minutes
- Add chicken stock and let it reduce by half (3-4 minutes)
- Sprinkle with fresh herbs and serve with the fish (fish on a bed of sauce)

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How to Keep Healthy, Showable Toenails



Plenty of people like to go open-toed in warm weather. Not everyone does it to show off their feet—just preferring the comfort and coolness instead—but nobody wants to be walking around with unsightly, discolored, or brittle nails if they can help it.

Taking care of your toenails through the year not only helps keep them more presentable, but also at lower risk of infections, ingrown toenails, and other miserable problems. Here are some tips to work into your routines:

- **Moisturize.** Keeping the skin around your toes moisturized helps prevent cracks where fungus can get in and slip to the nail. You can also use certain oils on your toenails to help keep them from drying out as well.
- **Trim properly.** Always trim relatively straight, not diving into deep curves around the edges. This helps prevent ingrown toenails. Also, keep a little bit of white nail on the ends of your toes for protection. Cutting too short can cause trauma.
- **Wear shoes and socks that fit.** Shoes with narrow toe boxes and socks that are too tight can both stress the nails into growing incorrectly and impede circulation. This can lead to weakened nails, ingrown toenails, or even black toenails.
- **Eat a good diet.** Your nails are made of a protein called keratin. A balanced diet with plenty of vitamins and nutrients helps your body produce keratin more efficiently, leading to healthier looking nails. Go for a good diet over supplements, unless you are advised to take them by a doctor.

Looking for more toenail tips? We are happy to answer any questions you may have about keeping them their best.