

CONDITIONS WE TREAT – SHIN SPLINTS

SHIN SPLINTS

Shin splints are common especially with prolonged standing and in athletic activity. Track and long distance runners often encounter shin splints and they are prevalent especially in the young. Often attributed to growing pain, shin splints are a true abnormal condition and no phase of growing should ever be painful. (Growing pain anywhere in the musculo-skeletal system indicates a problem which needs to be evaluated.)

The mechanics of shin splints are usually quite simple and are usually brought about when abnormal inturning of the ankle or flat feet produce excessive strain to the tibia (or lower leg bone). This strain produces swelling of the lower leg which becomes trapped under the very tight fascia or connective material of the lower leg. Such swelling is normal when the leg is stressed.

The answer to correcting shin splints is to remove the stress by correcting the posture of the ankle and foot. Orthotics, (prescription shoe inserts), are usually 100% effective in eliminating shin splints. However not all orthotics work. Many are fitted improperly and many are too uncomfortable to wear. A good orthotic must be supportive enough to correct the functional problem such as pronation and be comfortable at the same time. The chiropractic orthopedist prescribes orthotics to stabilize the lower back and correct mechanical problems of the lower extremities. In our office we use podiatric grade orthotics which are formed from an individual plaster mold of the patient's foot. This is the old fashioned method of making orthotics and in my opinion still the best method.

