

Chiropractic Treatment and Running Injuries

General information offered to my valued patients-- Dr. Matt Butler DC



Chiropractic and Running Injuries

There are two types of injuries which a runner may sustain: Acute trauma, and an overuse injury. The acute trauma is sudden, such as a torn ligament or broken bones. The most frequently problem encountered by chiropractors is injury through overuse. Here is an overview of the most common injuries a chiropractor will see.

Plantar Fasciitis

Cause: stretching or tearing the connective tissue on the bottom of the foot where the tissue attaches to the heel.

Symptoms: Pain in a specific area on the bottom of the foot towards the heel, possibly radiating towards the ball of the foot. The foot feels tender early in the morning and becomes less painful with movement. Is often associated with pronation and a fallen arch. Prevention: regular stretching of

the calf and Achilles tendon. It is also important that the feet are assessed for any biomechanical problems. Orthotics or insoles may also be prescribed.

Bursitis or Tendonitis

Common problem areas include the knee and ankle. It is an irritation of the bursa (fluid filled sac which sits under the tendon) or tendons from friction, trauma, pressure or dysfunction.

Symptoms: Pain and stiffness on movement with no visible swelling at first, but swelling as the condition worsens

Achilles Tendonitis

The Achilles tendon is the connection between the heel and the most powerful muscle group in the body, the calf and is a very common site for a disabling injury.

NB: To prevent a chronic problem, **do not run through pain**. If your Achilles tendon is sore, get it treated immediately. Again, it is also important that the feet are assessed for any biomechanical problems. Orthotics or insoles may also be prescribed and the use of soft heel-lifts are effective as part of chiropractic treatment.

Shin Splints

Cause: Faulty posture, poor shoes, fallen arches, insufficient warm-up, muscle fatigue, exercising on unyielding surfaces or poor running mechanics.

Symptoms: pain or discomfort on the front, the inside and/or the outside surface of the shin bone or directly on the shin bone.

Prevention: Good shoes with shock absorbing features, heel toe landing for the minimum impact, and calf stretches. Sports taping will also help.

Stress Fracture

These small fractures occur due to excessive stress (overuse of the bone) or an increase in intensity or distance running, resulting in gradual breakdown of the bone.

Symptoms: Pain occurs especially in the foot and lower leg becoming more intense with weight bearing activity. X-rays appear negative initially but fractures become visible up to two weeks after the initial injury.

Ankle Sprain

Running on level ground rarely results in an ankle sprain but cross country running, trail running and stepping in a pot hole all could potentially lead to an ankle sprain.

Treatment: Treat immediately. Rest Ice Compression (gentle) Elevation.

Note: Ice should be applied for about 15 minutes at a time, with at least 15 minute intervals between application.

Runners Knee

This essentially means softening of the cartilage of the knee cap. Portions of the cartilage may then be under either too much or too little pressure. This may result in cartilage deterioration at the inner part of the knee cap. Pain is usually also felt after sitting for a long period of time with the knee bent.

Iliotibial Band Syndrome

This is pain or aching in the outer side of the knee and usually happens in the middle or at the end of a run and is often seen in runners who train only on a track or on uneven ground.

How To Avoid Injuries

The majority of running injuries occur from overtraining. Avoid doing too much too soon. An unrelenting increase in mileage from one week to the next will ultimately result in a breakdown.

Progress in mileage and speed should be gradual

Mileage should only be increased by approximately 10% per week. Every third week drop back a small amount

Intersperse hard days and easy days each week

Devote one or two days each week to rest or non-running activities to allow the body to recover

Regular stretching may help reduce injuries

Have a chiropractor assess your running technique and running posture

Pain is a warning; stop running and consult a chiropractor immediately.

Treatment

At the initial consultation at our clinic, Dr. Butler takes a full medical history, investigates lifestyle, posture etc, carries out a thorough examination and recommends x-rays when necessary. Once the diagnosis is made, a treatment plan is prepared.

Dr. Butler uses gentle, specific manipulation and adjustment techniques to free stiff joints, restore normal movement and remove spinal irritation. He also use modalities such as hydro massage, ultrasound and interferential treatment.

Treatment is generally painless, although some short-term discomfort may sometimes be felt around the injured area.

Once painful symptoms settle, Dr. Butler will encourage you to follow a programme of rehabilitation exercises to help strengthen the injured area, improve flexibility and prevent recurrence of the problem.

Chiropractic treatment aims to restore normal function to your joints and muscles as well as your nervous system, which will increase control, co-ordination and muscle strength.

For more information on how chiropractic could help you and your family, contact Cr. Matt Butler for a consultation.



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