Gazelle Sports

Iliotibial Band Syndrome

What is it?

- The iliotibial band (ITB) is a piece of tough tissue that runs along the outside of your thigh from the hip to the knee. Once irritated, it can result in pain and swelling along the outside of the knee.
- The ITB is crucial in stabilizing the knee during walking or running. It can become irritated as the band slides back and forth across the bone on the side of the knee, building up friction.

The Anatomy of ITB Syndrome

What does it feel like?

- Aching pain along the side of the knee or thigh.
- The pain may not occur immediately during activity, but may intensify over time, especially as the foot strikes the ground. Pain might persist after activity.
- Pain may also be present just below the knee, as the ITB attaches there as well.

What are possible causes?

- Training habits such as running on a banked surface; inadequate warm-up or cool-down; or excessive up-hill and down-hill running.
- Abnormalities in leg/feet anatomy such as high or low arches, excessive leg rotation or uneven leg length.
- Muscle imbalance such as weak hip or core muscles.

What can I do?

- Rest, ice, compression and elevation (RICE) to reduce pain and inflammation.
- Stretching and using a foam roller to loosen the ITB can help prevent and treat pain although for some, this will be very painful.

Prevention

- Slow and steady build-up of miles.
- Replace your shoes in time.
- Avoid too many hills.
- Alternate direction of your track workouts.
- Cross train.

Try these products

- Compression sleeves or socks
- The Stick Massager
- KT tape
- Foam roller
- Compression tights
- Shoe inserts

Gazelle Sports is pleased to provide general information such as that above, however, this information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice.

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