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## **The Athletic Dilemma...Shin Splints** **by Lynn Gray**

Shin splints is as common an injury one can get when initiating a cardio walk or running program. By definition, a shin splint is when the muscle and tendon becomes inflamed alongside the shinbone.

What causes shin splints? There are a number of causes:

1. Weak arches which will put more stress on the front tendon
2. Too much movement in the shoe which allows your foot to overpronate -going inward or outward; the shoe should be a stabilized cushion trainer
3. Tight calves will create stress in the front vs. the back allowing more equal distribution in front and back of leg(s), weak shin muscles need to be strengthened with toe crunches each day
4. Improper walking or running form

What can be done once you have shin splints?

1. Take off a week to reduce inflammation
2. Ice your legs after walking or running, heat legs up before walking and running
3. Purchase a shin splint sleeve to keep your shin and calf stable
4. Check to see if your shoes are worn
5. Begin a stretching program such as yoga to keep both legs in balance; again practice toe crunches (picking up objects with your toes)

Hope this helps the beginner as well as the experienced walker and/or runner. I actually got a shin splint while training for the Boston Marathon a few years back...and I had run more than 60 marathons at that time.

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