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IMPROVING TREATMENT METHODS FOR SHIN SPLINTS

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Abstract
Medial tibial stress syndrome (MTSS), usually referred to as "shin splints," is a common overuse injury of the lower extremities affecting a large percentage of athletes. A variety of factors can lead to shin splints, including overtraining, poor footwear, muscular imbalances at the ankle, overtight or weak triceps surae muscles, imbalances at the thoracolumbar complex, and a body mass index (BMI) above 30. Injuries present with diffuse palpable pain that is often described as a dull ache following exercise. The purpose of this study is to assess the effectiveness of interventions to prevent shin splints.

Keywords: myofascial release (mfr) technique, overuse injury, athletes, pain, stretching.

INTRODUCTION

Pain along the shinbone (tibia) is termed "shin splints," which occurs due to the inflammation of the tissue in the area. It is also known as medial tibial stress syndrome (MTSS). Military recruits, runners, and dancers are all at risk of shin splint. Athletes who have recently increased or modified their training programs are prone to this, as well as athletes who have not properly warmed up, increased their training mileage suddenly, or have hyperpronated their feet. Muscles, tendons, and bone tissues are overworked as a result of increased exercise. For an athlete, this kind of injury can disturb their performance and all their activities [1]. A stress fracture of the tibia, which is represented by focused discomfort in the front tibia, is the most frequent complication of medial tibial stress syndrome [2]. The discomfort gradually lasts longer into the run as a patient's injury gets worse; eventually, it lasts through the cooldown and into daily activities and can localize to become point soreness [3]. People with a higher body mass index (BMI) and those who had previously used orthotic devices for a long time were shown to be more likely to develop diabetes. This condition affects the lower leg [4].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The keywords medial tibial stress syndrome, athletes, tibialis anterior, and shinbone were used to search databases for relevant peer-reviewed articles. In this study, relevant articles were screened and included. Research papers, original articles, systematic reviews, literature reviews, case-control studies, randomized trials, and cross-sectional studies were considered. By evaluating and categorizing inclusion and exclusion criteria, the review article examines the influence of flexibility exercises, compression bandage, supportive insoles, and rest on relief from shin splint.

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In 2015, Cheatham et al. assessed and critically evaluated current data to answer the following questions: Can self-myofascial release (SMR) using a foam roll or roller massager improve the range of motion (ROM) without affecting muscle function? Is self-myofascial release using a foam roller or roller massager effective for improving postexercise muscle repair and reducing delayed-onset muscle soreness (DOMS)? Does self- myofascial release using a foam roller or roller massager before an activity improve muscle performance? A search strategy was implemented prior to April 2015 that incorporated electronic databases, as well as well- known journals. This study included studies that met the following criteria: 1) peer-reviewed articles published in the English language; 2) several studies that have examined the effects of self-myofascial release (SMR) using a foam roll or roller massager on joint range of motion, acute muscle soreness, and delayed-onset muscle soreness (DOMS); 3) studies comparing a foam roll or roller massager intervention program to a control group; and 4) the comparison of two foam roll or roller massager intervention approaches. The PEDro scale was used to evaluate the papers' quality. Fourteen articles met the requirements for inclusion. With the use of a foam roller or roller massager, self-myofascial release tends to increase joint range of motion without sacrificing muscle performance in the near term and may impact muscle performance and delayed-onset muscle soreness after intense exercise. Short bouts of self- myofascial release before exercise do not appear to affect muscle performance. The body of research on the effects of SMR is still in its infancy. This study suggests that foam rolling and roller massage may be effective therapies for improving joint range of motion and muscle performance both before and after exercise.

Despite this, because different studies use different approaches, there is currently no consensus on the best SMR program [1].

In 2002, in their study, Couture and Karlson said that experts are divided over the origin of MTSS. When the cause is unknown, prevention can be challenging. Increased foot pronation, stronger plantar flexor muscles, a sudden increase in training volume, a low calcium intake, a hard or sloped (or both) running surface, the wrong footwear, and a history of injury are all thought to be risk factors for MTSS. It is near impossible to control all these risk factors for all our athletes unless we fully understand the true causes of shin splints [5].

In 2013, according to Mendiguchia et al., one of the most typical lower leg injuries in sports is medial tibial stress syndrome. According to a high-quality appraisal of the literature on MTSS prevention, it accounts for 6%-16% of all running injuries and up to 50% of all lower leg injuries. The following have been proposed as risk factors for MTSS: increased foot pronation, strengthened plantar flexors, increased forefoot or hindfoot (or both) varus tendency, abruptly increased training volume, inadequate calcium intake, hard or inclined running surfaces, poor footwear, and prior injury.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Shin splints are brought on by persistent strain on the connective tissues that attach your muscles to the bone and the shinbone [5]. Shin splints typically occur as a result of overuse injuries to the leg's muscle and bone tissue (periosteum). Usually, shin splints appear after abrupt changes in physical activity. These may entail frequency modifications, such as increasing the number of days you work out each week. Shin splints can also develop as a result of length and intensity increases, such as jogging uphill or for longer distances. Shin splints can also result from having flat feet or unusually inflexible arches, as well as from exercising in unsuitable or worn-out footwear. The majority of people who get shin splints are runners. Military recruits and dancers are two additional categories who regularly receive the diagnosis (Fig.1).

Figure 1: Area of inflammation.

Rest: Since shin splints are often brought on by overuse, the standard course of treatment includes taking several weeks off from the painful activity. During your rehabilitation, substitute lower-impact cardio exercises such as swimming, riding a stationary bike, or utilizing an elliptical trainer.

Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medicines: Pain and swelling are lessened by medications including ibuprofen, aspirin, and naproxen.

Ice: Several times a day, apply ice packs for 20 minutes at a time. Do not immediately apply ice to the skin. Compression: A compression bandage made of elastic may stop further swelling.

Flexibility exercises: Your shins may feel better after stretching the muscles in your lower legs.

Supportive shoes: During regular activities, wearing shoes with good cushioning will assist in lessening stress on your shins.

One of the most frequent injuries suffered by athletes is medial tibial stress syndrome (MTSS). Affected individuals may be more susceptible to such injuries due to biomechanical anomalies. It is an early stress injury in the progression of tibial stress

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fractures and manifests as exercise-induced pain over the anterior tibia. Significant causative factors include training errors as well. A significant increase in workload, volume, and high-impact exercise can put people at risk of MTSS. Rest and recovery should be stressed as key components of sports training because shin splints are caused by a mechanical overload of various components of the leg's musculoskeletal system that exceeds their capacity for adaptive reconstruction. The severity and length of the damage are decreased by a timely and accurate diagnosis. Physical therapists improve the quality of life through hands-on care, patient education, and prescribed movement. The goal of treatment should be to decrease discomfort and inflammation while also identifying any potential biomechanical issues that might be resolved with stretching and strengthening routines or by using an orthotic device. The best kind of treatment is prevention since it stops an injury from getting worse.

CONCLUSION

There are a variety of patterns of sports injuries with various types and natures of sports events, but shin splint is one of the most common. Lower leg pain is the most common symptom of shin splints. Depending on the severity of the pain, the shin bone may feel tender to the touch. MTSS is a common injury among athletes who seek treatment at sports injury centers. Therefore, sports persons should be more aware of the risk factors of shin splints and should be aware of how to treat and prevent them. A variety of clinical investigations can be conducted to determine the condition. CT and MRI scans can reveal the exact location of the condition. This article has discussed various interventions that can be used to manage shin discomfort and ankle dorsiflexion range of motion in participants with medial tibial stress syndrome. This article offers a brief overview of the condition to aid clinical practitioners, which will be useful for future studies on the same issue.

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