



Leg Problems

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Anatomy 101

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How important are our legs? Well, along with the feet, they take us everywhere we want to go, and then some. Climbing mountains, biking valleys, swimming lakes and running marathons, the list is endless. We demand a lot of our lower body even in everyday activities, so it's no wonder that they can give us problems. The power and strength of movement is derived from our legs and when compromised in any way whether it stem from the hip, knee, calf or foot can slow us down and cause a world of frustration.

The muscles of the leg can be grouped into five major areas: the quadriceps, the hamstrings, the adductors, the anterior compartment of the calf and the posterior compartment of the calf. Each group is then made up of individual muscles that contribute to the overall

movement of the leg.

Bones and joints also need to be considered when thinking in terms of causative factors. Because our weight is distributed down to our heels, the constant load that is placed on them is considerable resulting in wear and tear.

There are many differing problems that can plague a person's lower limbs. It could be a result of trauma, a sprain, strain or direct blow to an areas. It could be that there is asymmetry in the pelvis or feet that causes misalignments in the connecting joints or over-compensation of muscles trying to keep the body upright and balanced. Manifestations can be seen in any of the joints or muscles stemming from the feet, to the low back and even as far up as the neck

Special points of interest:

- * Because running is what physiologists classify as a vigorous exercise, it revs up your metabolism to the point where your body continues burning calories after you have stopped running. This afterburn can add another 20 percent to your total calorie burn.
- * From The Principles of Running by Amby Burfoot

When it hurts to move.... try acupuncture!

Often times, a sprained ankle, or a blown out knee are much to painful to have any kind of manipulation done on them. And as such, this is not the time for it. Your body is in the process of sending nutrients and healing substances to the area which results in swelling and inflammation. The goal of treatment is focused on reducing pain and swelling and accelerating the heal-

ing process. This is accomplished in three ways.

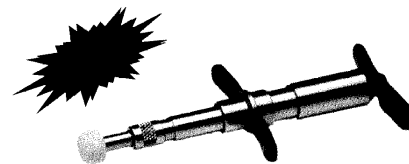
First off, it increases local circulation which not only helps to reduce swelling but also increases the flow of healing agents to the area. Secondly, it increases a person's pain tolerance by stimulating and releasing endorphins. Thirdly, by reducing edematous tissue and discomfort improved range of motion can be attained.

Chiropractic isn't just for your back...

Chiropractic care doesn't always involve an adjustment, at least maybe not one that you are familiar with in the spine where the doctor manipulates the vertebrae manually. Depending on the nature of the injury or condition there are a number of other modalities that can be used to help relax muscles and adjust joints.

Interferential current (IFC) is a therapeutic treatment to aid in the relief of pain and the promotion of soft tissue healing. Tiny amounts of electrical impulses are induced into the tissues in the vicinity of the problem. Where these waves intersect, below the surface of the skin, a low-frequency stimulation prompts the body to secrete endorphins and other pain killers to help relieve pain. Ligament strains, sprains and muscle spasms respond well to this treatment and help to relax the muscle in order to then adjust the joint.

Adjustments to the feet and knees are often accomplished by using either an activator (shown in picture) or with extremity drop pieces (not shown). This allows the doctor to pinpoint those small articulations with more accuracy with the proper amount of pressure and with a much gentler action.



Many people have had much success with chiropractic care for their leg problems. For examples, visit our website at www.back2health4you.com, then go to [Other Information](#) and [Success Stories](#).

If the shoe fits...

Good material and a comfortable fit aren't the only things that you should consider when buying an athletic shoe. You really need to look at the type of sport that you will be using it for as motion control, arch support, cushioning will differ not only from sport to sport but also from foot to foot. For example, while a running shoe should provide overall shock absorption and heel control, walking shoes should be lightweight and provide shock absorption under the ball of

the foot. Whether you are a pronator or a supinator will also dictate what type of support is necessary to reduce musculoskeletal complaints and injuries. Knowing when your shoe is wearing out is another important factor in ensuring that you are not adding to any lower leg or foot problems. These factors aren't looked at here but be sure to take your old shoes in to the store with you so that you can compare it to a new one. Having a knowledgeable salesperson to evaluate the needs of your feet is an important component in investing in the proper footwear. Don't be afraid to ask questions and try to be as specific as possible when describing what it is that YOU want out of your shoe.

Iliotibial Band (ITB) Syndrome

The cause of a tight ITB is multiple in nature. It is often a chain reaction of postural misalignments that come from the foot. Overpronation is one. A pronated foot increases the stress at the hip and knee and will call in reinforcement from the ITB for more support. Supportive shoes and orthotics can help correct this problem that may then alleviate problems at both the knee and hip as well as pelvic rotation. Another sizeable reason is habitual movements that require prolonged flexion at the hip such as sitting or cycling.

The 'band' itself is a long tendon that runs on the outside of the leg from the hip (from the TFL muscle to be exact) to just below the knee. If you feel the two large bony prominences, on either side of your knee (called epicondyles of the femur), the tendon runs just behind the one on the outside. The pain that results from this condition is due to a

frictioning action of the tendon over that lateral epicondyle... not pleasant! The reason for the frictioning is due to the tightness of the ITB.

Massage therapy is one avenue of handling this condition. A treatment plan may include techniques applied to reduce adhesions or trigger points in the low back, gluteals and the tensor fascia lata, lengthening of the iliotibial band itself, stretching and application of ice. Another is the Active Release Technique® (ART). Adhesions are a very common symptom of ITB and therefore indicated for treatment by ART. Areas to be treated may include the iliotibial band itself at the insertion point of the knee. ART involves gently stretching the muscle while applying pressure, breaking up the adhesion.

Chiropractic adjustments to the feet, knees, hip and pelvis along with acupuncture are also quite effective ways to treat this condition.