

Tibial Stress Syndrome in Sport

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Abstract

Medial tibial stress syndrome (MTSS), also known as shin splints or tibial periostitis, is characterized by pain in the middle and lower end of the tibia; the pain is usually elicited by practicing sports or other physical activities. It is a common cause of leg pain in athletes and militaries. Prolonged military marching and physical activity involving excess training of the lower limbs contribute to the stress reaction of the bone, as confirmed by imaging studies. This condition has been considered a precursor stage for stress fracture. The criteria for diagnosis of MTSS were established by Yates and White. Although the prognosis of MTSS is usually benign, it can evolve to chronicity and be disabling. Optimal treatment for MTSS has yet to be established. Extracorporeal shockwave treatment (ESWT) is a tool aimed at alleviating symptoms and shortening recovery time in MTSS. Three studies have shown ESWT combined with a specific exercise program to be effective for MTSS. Regarding the recovery time, one study showed that the ESWT group recovered in 59 days while the control group did so in 91 days, another study obtained results compatible with scores 1 and 2 on the Likert scale in 76% of the patients in the ESWT versus 37% of the control group. A third study showed 82.6% excellent or good results in the ESWT group as opposed to 36.8% in the control group to the Roles and Maudsley scale. In addition, the literature has pointed out the efficacy of 1-3 ESWT sessions in this pathology.

Keywords: Medial tibial stress syndrome, Shine splints, Shockwaves treatment.

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