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r/running • 11y ago

jag_48



Which is better for shin splints? A minimalist or cushioned shoe?

I am now wearing a standard Nike shoe (nothing fancy) and I get really bad shin splints after a couple of days of running.

After doing some research, I discovered that minimalist shoes can prevent shin splints because they force you to run properly and make it difficult for you to run with poor form. But every time I go to a sports store and ask for their suggestions on a shoe that will help my shin splints, they give me tons of options with lots of cushion and support.

So, I don't know which to go with. A minimalist shoe or a cushioned shoe? What do you suggest?



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_o_o_o_o_o_ • 11y ago

IMHO, shin splints are more about overuse than about the kind of shoe you wear. Use compression socks after your run for temporary relief.. and go slower than you want to. Perhaps take a couple of extra rest days. Soon the shin muscles will catch up with the rest of the body.



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PhysicsIsMyBitch • 11y ago

IMHO, shin splints are more about overuse than about the kind of shoe you wear

Totally agree. Once you've got them, you've got to rest. You're probably ramping up your running too fast. The whole "minimalist shoe to stop shin splints" works on the premise that it's going to force you (through pain) to run with better form and to ramp up distance slowly. Even with a minimalist shoe if you overdo it you'll get splints.

I'd tend to stick with the advice of the shoe store and go with a supportive shoe, rest up and once the pain is gone ramp up your running slowly to let your muscles catch up. Once you can run regularly without pain, then you can think of switching to a minimal shoe and letting your form and muscles settle in.

[Skip to main content](#) Create**Frontrunner453** • 11y ago

Not about the shoes. Strengthen your tibialis anterior muscle via lots of toe raises.

  11  ...**Waughmpwaughmp** • 11y ago

After years of debilitating shin splints, some guy suggested this to me. Two months of three times a week toe raises, multiple sets, always until I felt the burn. Ten years later I still have not had shin splints again. Maybe I'm a fluke, but it drives me nuts that this isn't the top advice during shin splints conversations or on websites. Literally gave me running back.

  8  ...**mtj23** • 11y ago

That could very well be it. I ran in VFFs for about two years back in 08 and they got rid of my shin splints, but one thing I noticed was that my tibialis anteriors got huge from picking my toes up higher when I ran (I used to run a lot of trails in the VFFs). That could very well be what ended my shin splints.

 2  ...**ihavebigjiji** • 11y ago

Shin splints are a stress injury. People who get shin splints are typically either new runners who are essentially breaking their legs in or people running in shoes that are too old/low cushioning for them. Now, I don't know the age of your current pair of shoes, but EVA foam that Nike (and most all other brands) use to cushion their shoes is injected with a liquid that "dries out" after roughly three years, which occurs even if it's been sitting in a box the whole time. This is why old shoes go on sale. Your shoes also have limited mileage, just like a car. For an average middle-of-the-road-cushioned shoe, this is about 300-500 miles. After this, you will start to notice little creases in the foam where it has been compressed and not fully expanded again.

In short, if you want to reduce shin splints, buy a new pair of shoes with a good amount of cushioning in them. In my personal opinion, a minimalist shoe is a bad idea for any other than the elite runners of our group. In fact, I know dozens of elite runners (sub-4-minute kilometers) and they ALL wear cushioned shoes. Go to your local running store that does proper gait analysis and have them put you in a pair of shoes that will protect your body from the high-impact sport that is running. Your form will develop on it's own, and is not a typical cause of shin splints anyways.

Cheers.

(Source: Running Room employee and paid instructor for beginner training programs.)

  4  ...**zebano** • 11y ago Top 1% Commenter

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Things that anecdotally helped me:

1. To raises
2. heel walks
3. abiding by the 10% rule
4. landing my feet under my hips (form)
5. I lost 20 pounds

FWIW when I finally got to the point that I was running 45mpw without shin splints I was doing it in minimalist shoes. I've run in both minimalist and non minimalist shoes since then and they haven't come back but I've maintained the four things I listed above.



ihavebigjiji • 11y ago

Oh god, don't even get me started on HOKAs. While I am a firm believer that putting adequate shielding between your feet and the ground is better, anything by Hoka just takes that and blows it way out of proportion. I'm sure you're just as likely to be injured in a Hoka as you are in a Vibram 5-finger, as they both represent the ridiculous-internet-fad extreme.

Also, when I say "adequate shielding," that varies wildly from person to person. So maybe some people benefit greatly from ultra minimalist/maximalist, but most lie somewhere in between. That's why, when I'm fitting people for shoes, I always lean on the safe side and give them something with even a little bit of padding. Nothing wrong with a light/low cushion shoe.



mtj23 • 11y ago

People who get shin splints are typically either new runners who are essentially breaking their legs in or people running in shoes that are too old/low cushioning for them.

I'm not saying that minimalist shoes get rid of shin splints, but my personal experience was that my shin splints went away when I switched to them, and they haven't come back even as I transitioned back to more cushioned shoes a few years ago.

I started running in 06, developed pretty debilitating shin splints by late 07 and over the next year went to several different specialty running stores to get fitted for more and more cushioned (and expensive) shoes. My shin splints got worse. I tried ice baths, compression wraps, trying to change my stride, dramatically cutting back my running volume, etc.

In 08 I read a post here on Reddit making fun of the way VFFs looked and saw a few comments by people saying they had fixed their shin splints. By that point I was desperate and willing to try anything. Bought a pair (cheapest running shoes I ever bought until I discovered cross country shoes years later) and within three months my shin splints were gone. The only time they ever came back was when I misplaced them a year later and did a brisk 7 miles in an old pair of aggressively cushioned shoes.

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striker.

2. My pace slowed down considerably when I transitioned, as my feet were now the most sore part of my running anatomy and took a while to acclimate.
3. My volume decreased significantly at first, for the same reason.

I have long since stopped running in VFFs, switching to progressively less minimalist shoes as the years have gone by, though I do still trail run in cross country shoes. I think I've found that for me personally the less toe drop in the shoe the better, but about 8 to 10 mm of cushion is pretty nice for those long road runs.

↑ 1 ↓ ...



[deleted] • 11y ago

Not minimalist, but low-drop cushioned shoes helped me fix shin splints last year. I wore them for 1 month exclusively without reducing mileage at all and the problem disappeared completely. I went to regular trainers afterwards, absolutely no problems with shins since then. In contrast, exercises for tibialis anterior had no effect, so I think the actual problem were my calves.

↑ 2 ↓ ...



xtrumpclimbs • 11y ago

My opinion, in my own experience only, is that most of shin splints are caused by:

- overtraining (too much effort or too many hours)
- bad training (for instance, running 5K at 80% of your Max, when you should do it at 50%).
- bad running positions

It's not the **shoe** but the **way** you run.

I've had pretty bad shin splints until I started practicing slower runs (MAF) and these techniques:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wRkeBVMQSgg>

There were other videos (and better quality than that too) but those guys know what they are talking about, also look for gliders vs gazelles. Summary: lean a bit forward, keep your shoulders and head up, hit the ground with mid-front foot strikes, not the heel strikes.

Since january, I've been recovering from shint splints, but running 60-80 kms per week!. How so? Not shoes, but running better, slower, and more naturally instead of hitting the ground with my heels like a crazy person :D

PS: I ran 10K in december at 4:55m/km and I just ran 26K at 4:36m/km last weekend. Without much problem, really.

↑ 2 ↓ ...



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2. build up more time on your feet, run by time not distance, start at 3 days per week and add a day every few weeks until you get to 5-6 days
3. move up to 45 min to an hour each run slowly
4. after you can regularly run an hour at a time then you may add speedy runs like intervals and repeats

helped me rid myself of shin splints for good

↑ 1 ↓ ...



notevenapro • 11y ago

I run about 35-40 miles a week. Last year I slowly switched to a stability shoe and got shin splints about a month later.

I switched back to neutral shoes and they went away.

↑ 1 ↓ ...



JokerNJ • 11y ago

1. Are you a troll? Because that's a hand grenade of a question.
2. Everyone has an opinion on this. Almost everyone will have an anecdote. See 4. below.
3. My suggestion would be to go to a running store (if you haven't been already). If they analyse your run and recommend a cushioned shoe - then get a cushioned shoe.
4. In my own case, I would get shin splints when I ran with cross training shoes or regular Nikes. I got my gait looked at by a running shop, they recommended cushioning to take account of my over-pronation. It worked really well for me. I could have spent time trying to change my gait or strengthening specific groups of muscles but I just wanted to run. Also, I wear formal shoes for work all day so that's what my feet will be acclimatised to.

↑ 1 ↓ ...