

HEALTH REPORT

VOLUME 10

ISSUE 99

SHIN SPLINT PAIN EASED WITH ACUPUNCTURE!

People who do a good deal of running, especially on hard surfaces, sometimes develop a painful condition in the lower leg known as shin splints. This problem is characterized by inflammation in the shin — the front of the leg between the ankle and the knee cap.

The condition usually affects people in running sports, change of running surfaces, excessive road running and even from jumping exercises or activities, and may even be caused by over-use. Small tears begin to develop where the muscles of the legs connect with one of the two bones of the lower leg — the larger tibia or the smaller fibula.

The typically recommended treatment for the condition includes the use of electrotherapy and ultrasound while following a regimen of rehabilitative exercises. A change of training techniques, surfaces, and footwear are often also recommended.

A study was recently conducted to see if including Acupuncture in the recovery process could produce positive results. A group of 40 athletes suffering from shin splints participated.

The group was divided three ways. A sports medicine group of 17 received standard treatments including ultrasound, ice and exercises. An Acupuncture group of 12 received treatments along the edge of the tibia muscles where the tears were identified as taking place. Finally, a combined treatments group of 11 used elements of both approaches. Each participant got a minimum of 2 treatments per week for 3 weeks.

Both the Acupuncture and the combined groups recorded significantly lower pain levels after treatments — both during sports activities and during rest periods afterwards. The effectiveness of pain relief was measured as 72.5% for the Acupuncture group. The combined group registered a 54.5% gain with a 46.5% improvement for the sports medicine group. The positive outcome points to Acupuncture as a probable solution to keep runners on the track.