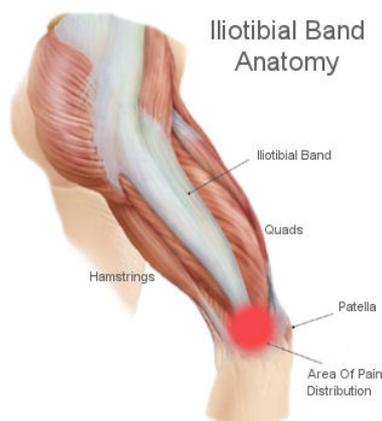


## ITB FRICTION SYNDROME

Iliotibial band (ITB) Friction syndrome is one of the most common causes of lateral (outside) knee pain that we see, especially in runners.

The ITB is a band of connective tissue that spans the length of the outer thigh. It originates up at the hip from another structure called the TFL (tensor fascia lata) and inserts onto the tibia just below the knee.

ITB friction occurs when the ITB gets tight & inflamed and begins to rub over the lateral femoral condyle on the outside of the knee joint producing acute pain in this area.



**Predisposing factors:** Some factors such as pronated feet, tight calves, poor pelvic stability, anterior hip inflexibility and poor lower limb control can increase the likelihood of developing this problem. Other extrinsic factors such as footwear & training loads also need to be considered.

### SYMPTOMS

- Pain on the outside of the knee
- Tenderness over the outside of the knee
- Pain generally worsens with activities such as running, particularly downhill and downstairs
- In more severe cases there may be swelling and or crepitus (creaking) over the side of the knee
- Pain can extend up into the thigh.

**DIAGNOSIS:** A skilled physiotherapist will be able to diagnose ITB friction from your clinical history and a

thorough examination. There is usually no need for further investigation.

### TREATMENT & MANAGEMENT

Physiotherapy is a vital tool to manage ITB friction syndrome. In the initial stages rest from aggravating activities will be required to allow inflammation and pain to settle.

Physiotherapy treatment may include the following:

- Soft tissue releases to tight structures such as the ITB, TFL, gluteus medius, lateral quadriceps and lateral hamstring
- Addressing biomechanical factors such as poor pelvic stability and anterior hip inflexibility
- Advice regarding exercise modification, footwear & training loads.
- Dry needling
- Electrophysical therapy to help with pain & inflammation.
- Icing & use of anti-inflammatory medication

With the correct treatment most people with ITB friction syndrome will make a full recovery, however rehabilitation can be a lengthy process in those patients who have had the condition for a while.

**Can it be prevented?** There are some exercises that we would advise runners do on a regular basis in an attempt to prevent excessive tightness of structures such as the ITB. Use of a foam roller is a great form of self massage. Hip flexor stretches & general pelvic stability are also important. Your physiotherapist will be able to advise you more thoroughly on this if required.

If any of this sounds familiar and you would like to make an appointment please contact us on **9328 3822**. Ross and Emma specialise in the treatment of sports and musculoskeletal injuries.

