

iliotibial band friction syndrome

what is iliotibial band friction syndrome?

Iliotibial Band Friction Syndrome is an overuse injury that occurs as a result of the rubbing between the iliotibial band (a non-elastic collagen cord stretching from the outside of the hip to below the outside of the knee) and the lateral epicondyle on the femur (the outside of the knee). It is often the result of iliotibial band and tensor fascia lata muscle (outside of thigh) tightness.

who is at risk?

- Children/adolescents who participate in activities that require repetitive flexion (bending) and/or extension (straightening) of knee. (i.e. runners, skiers, cyclist, etc).
- Children/adolescents who have poor flexibility (tight muscles) in legs during rapid growth.
- Children/adolescents who have poor alignment of pelvis, legs and/or feet.
- Children/adolescents who have had improper training techniques and/or equipment.

what are the symptoms?

- The child/adolescent could describe it as a dull/achy or sharp pain on the lateral aspect of the knee.
- The child/adolescent could describe the pain as being intermittent dependent on activity level. The pain often becomes worse with distance (e.g. longer runs) and downhill activities.
- Some child/adolescent will report a grind and/or click feeling in the lateral (outside) knee.

what are the treatment options?

Conservative/non-surgical treatment:

- Rest from aggravating activities or “relative” rest.
- Ice the area after activity and when painful for 10 to 20 minutes up to once an hour.
- Muscle stretching to improve flexibility.
 - Stretching should be done both before and after activity.
 - Concentrate on tensor fascia lata/abductors (side of thigh), hamstring (back of thigh), quadriceps (front of thigh) and gastrocnemius/soleus (calf) stretching.
- If the condition does not improve, a referral to physical therapy to address pain, swelling, range of motion, flexibility, strength, gait, bracing and a return to sport training program will usually improve symptoms.

Surgical treatment:

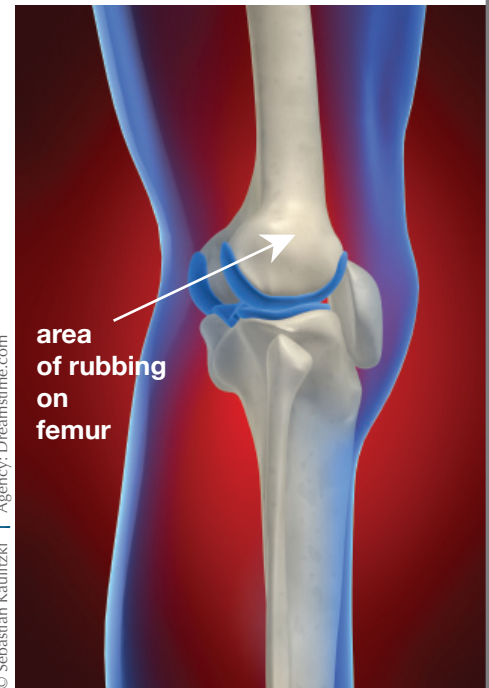
- Rarely needed.

what is the time frame for returning to activity/sport?

Depending on the severity of the injury, two to three months of relative rest with a good stretching program may be required.

what are the long-term side effects?

Recurrent injuries in the first few months are common, illustrating the need for ongoing flexibility training and proper warm-up techniques. Training programs that allows for cross training are beneficial.



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Side View of Knee