

IT Band Syndrome

What it is and What You can do About it

Overview of IT Band Syndrome:

- IT Band Syndrome (ITBS) involves the IT band, a connective tissue band that runs along the outer thigh, from the outside of the pelvic bone to down just below the knee.
- The IT band can become irritated with repeated bending and straightening of the knee, such as running and cycling. If too much tension is placed on the IT band, it rubs against areas of the bones, leading to increased friction, microtrauma and inflammation.
- Since the IT band spans across the outside of the hip joint and the knee joint, the area of irritation can vary depending on where the greatest point of friction is located. The outside of the knee is more often the source of pain.
- Signs and symptoms include: pain located in the outside knee or hip, swelling around the knee, “snapping” feeling over knee when bending/straightening and pain during/after walking, stairs and standing from seated position.
- Prevention: vary activity to avoid excessive repetition of movement, warm-up and begin activity gradually, maintain core/leg strength and flexibility and modify or stop activity at the start of pain.



Physical Therapy Can Help You By:

- Assessing weakness or tightness in muscles that could be contributing to poor joint mechanics and pain.
- Relieving pain with cold laser or ultrasound and manual techniques such as myofascial release.
- Developing a complete plan for stretching/strengthening muscles in the leg and core to improve body mechanics and reduce tension on IT band.

Exercise Example to Try:

- IT band stretch (pictured above, right): While standing, cross left foot over right, bend to the left and slightly forward (stretch should be felt in the outside right leg), hold 30 seconds, repeat 4 times. Switch leg positions and repeat. Complete twice daily.

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PHYSICAL THERAPY

3819 Monroe Ave.

Pittsford, NY 14534

586-3819

www.RegainPT.com