



What is it?

The shin bone (tibia) is the large bone at the front of the lower leg. Shin pain is common and can also be called shin splints. Shin pain can happen when you try a new form of exercise or when you push yourself. This kind of pain is common in runners and dancers.

When your shin pain starts, you may notice it only when you exercise. Sometimes your pain can get worse and you may feel it while resting as well. If you keep on using your shin, you may cause a stress fracture. This injury will take longer to heal. Common treatments for shin pain include:

- Rest
- Stretching the muscle around your shin
- Putting ice on the area
- Orthotics
- Stopping what is likely to be causing your pain
- Pain-relieving medications

Your GP will help you find the cause of your shin pain and recommend the right treatment.

What questions could I ask my doctor?

- What activities should I avoid?*
- What can I do to strengthen my shin?*
- How long will my shin take to heal?*



What will my GP do now?

Your GP may talk to you about your health, how you exercise and any recent changes in your routine to try and find the cause of the pain.

They may look at where the pain is on the shin, and if pain is felt in any other parts of the leg or foot, to see if pain is felt before, during or after movement.

Your GP may arrange an X-ray or scan if they suspect you may have a stress fracture. Your GP may also try to rule out other factors causing your shin pain, like shoes that don't fit well, running on hard surfaces or foot problems.

What will my GP do in the future?

Your GP may check on your shin pain two months after your first visit. If you still have pain and other symptoms like swelling, your GP may suggest you have an X-ray or a scan. Your GP can refer you to a physiotherapist if you need more support.

What can I do?

Follow your GP's advice about rest and avoiding activities that may make the shin pain worse. Ask your GP about strength exercises and if you need to avoid anything. Keep an eye on your symptoms. See your GP if the shin pain is not getting better.

What supports are available?

If your shin pain is not getting better, your GP can refer you to a physiotherapist or private specialist.

Where can I learn more?

- **Sports Medicine Australia** - Shin pain: sma.org.au
- **Patient.info** - Shin splints: patient.info