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IT Band Syndrome

What is IT band syndrome?

- Iliotibial (IT) band syndrome is inflammation and pain on the outer side of the knee. The IT band is a layer of connective tissue. It begins at a muscle near the outer side of your hip, travels down the outer side of your thigh, crosses the outer side of your knee, and attaches to the outer side of your upper shin bone.

How does IT band syndrome occur?

- IT band syndrome occurs when this band repeatedly rubs over the bump of the thigh bone near the knee, causing the band to be irritated. This most often occurs in running. IT band syndrome can be a result of:
 - Having a tight IT band
 - Having tight hip, pelvis, or leg muscles
 - Your legs not being the same length
 - Running in shoes with excess wear along the outside of the heel
 - Running on sloped surfaces

What are the symptoms of IT band syndrome?

- The main symptom of IT band syndrome is pain along the outer side of the knee.

How is IT band syndrome diagnosed?

- Your doctor will examine your knee and find tenderness where the band passes over the bump on the outer side of your knee. Your IT band may also be found to be tight.

How is IT band syndrome treated?

- Treatment for IT band syndrome may include the following:
 - Use ice over your IT band 20-30 minutes 3-4 times per day
 - Take anti-inflammatory medication as directed by your doctor
 - Perform ice massage over your knee and IT band for 5-10 minutes
 - Perform home stretching exercises as directed
- Your doctor may recommend a cortisone injection to reduce inflammation and pain. You will need to change your sport or activity while the IT band is healing.