

Iliotibial (IT) Band Syndrome



Scan this QR Code to access a detailed video that enhances the information in this handout. It includes step by step guidance and visual demonstrations for each exercise.

What is IT band syndrome?

The IT band extends from the hip to the outer part of the knee. IT band syndrome occurs when this band becomes too tight, leading to friction and irritation along the outer knee. This friction causes inflammation of the surrounding tissue leading to pain.

IT band syndrome is considered an overuse and repetitive stress injury. Factors like poor training methods, inadequate stretching, and hip and thigh muscular imbalances play a role. Uneven running surfaces and improper footwear can also provoke the condition, as can a sudden increase in exercise intensity.

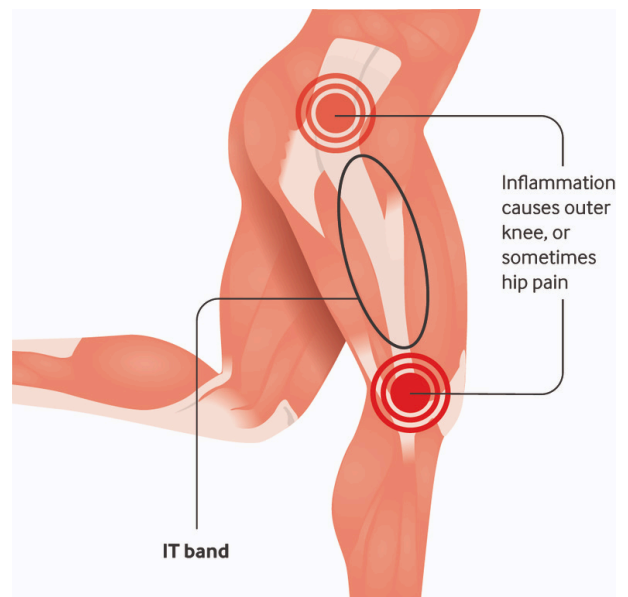
How is it treated?

Reduce training intensity and physical activity. Ice packs or anti-inflammatory medications such as ibuprofen or naproxen can help reduce pain. Physical therapy or a home rehab program emphasizing stretching and strengthening is crucial to recovery.

How long is the recovery?

Recovery time depends on the severity and adherence to treatment. Symptoms often improve within a few weeks of starting treatment. However, full recovery, particularly for chronic or severe cases, can take several months. Be patient.

Resuming sports or activities should be gradual and based on pain tolerance. Avoid symptom-triggering activities until well-managed. Begin with low-impact exercises and gradually increase intensity.



IT Band Syndrome Rehabilitation Exercises

Standing IT Band Stretch

- Objective: improve flexibility along the outer thigh and hip
- Stand on the affected leg and cross your other leg in front of it. Gently allow the hip of the affected leg to drop outwards away from your body. Lean your upper body slightly towards the opposite side to increase the stretch. You should feel a stretch along the hip and side of the affected leg.
- Perform this 3 times, 30 seconds each.



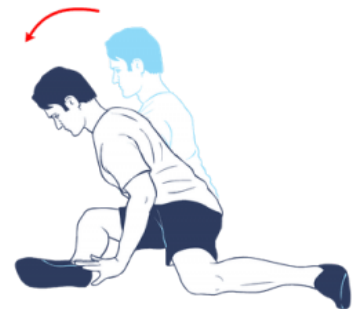
Standing Quadriceps Stretch

- Objective: reduce tension along the IT band
- Stand on the unaffected leg. Bend the knee of your injured leg bringing your heel towards the glutes. Grasp the ankle with your hand. You should feel a stretch along your thigh muscle.
- Perform this 3 times, 30 seconds each.



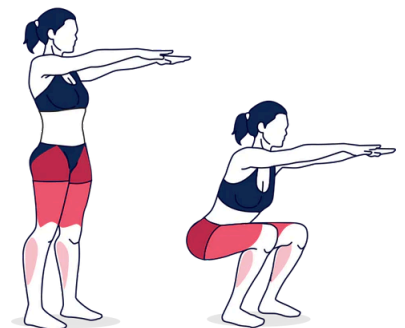
Glute 90/90 Stretch

- Objective: improve flexibility of the gluteus medius and gluteus minimus muscles
- Sit on the floor and bend both knees to create 90 degree angles with each leg. Gently lean forward from the hips, moving towards your front thigh. You should feel a stretch in the back of the hips.
- Perform this 3 times, 30 seconds each.



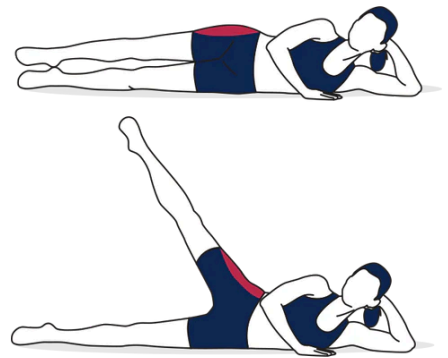
Body Weight Squat

- Objective: strengthen the quadriceps, hamstrings, glutes, and calf muscles
- Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. Extend your arms straight in front of you to help with balance. Slowly bend your knees, keeping your back straight and your core engaged. Aim to lower until your thighs are parallel to the floor. Consider starting at a half squat (stopping half way down) and gradually progress to a full squat as you recover. Use weights to increase difficulty.
- Complete 2 sets of 15 to 20 repetitions.



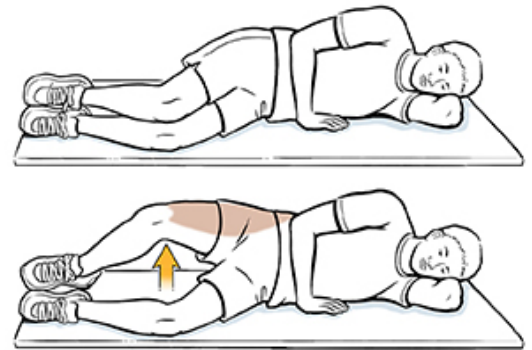
Side Lying Leg Raise

- Objective: strengthen hip abductors to enhance stability and balance
- Lie on your side with your legs straight. Raise the upper leg while maintaining a straight line with your body. Aim to lift it to about 45 degrees, hold it briefly at the top, and then gently lower it back down.
- Complete 2 sets of 15 to 20 repetitions.



Side Lying Clamshell

- Objective: strengthen hip and pelvic muscles
- Lie on your side with both your hips and knees bent. Keep your feet together. Then, raise the top knee as high as possible without moving your hips or pelvis. Pause for a moment at the top, where you feel maximum engagement in your glutes, and then slowly lower the knee back down. To increase difficulty, use resistance bands around your thighs, just above the knees.
- Complete 2 sets of 15 to 20 repetitions.



Glute Hip Bridge

- Objective: strengthen gluteus maximus, hamstrings, pelvis, and torso
- Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the ground, about hip width apart. Keep your arms flat at your sides. Lift your hips, aiming to form a straight line from your shoulders to your knees. Squeeze your glutes and hold briefly at the top before gently lowering back down. To increase the challenge, wrap a resistance band around your waist.
- Complete 2 sets of 15 to 20 repetitions.

