Shin splints is a general term to describe the pain that many runners and other athletes get in the front or even backs of their lower legs. This pain is often brought on by increases in training, long periods or standing, or beginning an activity after being sedentary. The actual pain of shin splints, otherwise known as medial tibial stress syndrome, is an irritation of the periosteum (outer layer of bone) on the tibia. This typically occurs because of fatigue or trauma of the muscles and tendons that attach to the bone.

There are a few reasons that some athletes may be more prone to having this painful condition.

- Flat feet and over pronation (rolling feet inward) when walking
- Wearing old/worn out shoes
- Running on uneven surfaces
- Increasing training regimen too quickly
- Athletes who are fatigued after a long season of running (i.e. soccer, cross country)

Many people think that having pain in their shins is just a necessary evil that goes along with running, but it is important to have looked at, and there is a lot that can be done to treat and prevent it. Shin pain with running should not be ignored, because if it continues to progress it can lead to stress fractures.

A few things that can be done to treat and prevent shin splints:

- Get new running shoes every 300-400 miles
- Take some time off running, or spend more time cross training to allow inflammation a chance to settle down (biking and swimming are great options)
- Use a bag of ice or an ice cup massage after running (to do an ice cup massage, just freeze water into a 3 oz Dixie cup, and rub over shins after workout)
- Perform stretches of the shin and calf
- Come into the office for an Active Release technique treatment. This will reduce tension and scar tissue.

With the Chicago marathon, cross country season, and many other races quickly approaching, runners are putting in more miles than ever. If you or someone you know is experiencing shin pain, or has any questions feel free to give Dr. Tripp a call at (630) 448-0255.