

CHEAT SHEET

The 8 Most Common Cycling Injuries and How to Avoid Them

INJURY	SIGNS & SYMPTOMS	COMMON CAUSES	TIP
Knee Pain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pain in/under the kneecap ● Worse going up and down hills/stairs ● Worse after prolonged sitting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Poor alignment and tracking of kneecap due to muscle weaknesses and tightness ● Increased training intensity, seat too low, riding too long in big gears ● Cleat too near inside of shoe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Address muscle imbalances with strengthening and stretching exercises ● Vary your pedal cadence ● Raise seat height ● Use insert in shoe to stabilise foot and reduce strain on knee ● Move cleat outwards
Back Pain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deep ache across lower lumbar area with stiffness ● Can refer into buttocks, groin and hip ● Worse after prolonged sitting and on getting up in the morning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mechanical factors like poor bike posture, hunching over handlebars ● Lack of flexibility ● Weak core muscles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improve flexibility ● Core strengthening ● Alternate postures whilst riding to reduce load on spine ● Check leg length discrepancy
Neck Pain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pain along back and sides of neck ● Can refer pain to shoulder tips and down between shoulder blades 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Poor bike posture – excessive hyperextension (looking up) of the neck ● Weak stabilising muscles of neck 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strengthen deep neck flexors (stabiliser muscles) ● Lengthen trapezius muscles by stretching ● Shorten your reach on bike ● Raise handlebars ● Vary hand positions whilst riding to change neck postures
Iliotibial Band (ITB) Pain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pain and tenderness on outside of knee ● Occasionally swelling ● Pain walking up and down stairs ● Stiffness after inactivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Repetitive rubbing of band over bony condyles ● Exacerbated by poor flexibility of thigh, hip and buttock muscles ● Weak pelvic stabiliser muscles ● Cleat too near outside of shoe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Raise seat height ● If you pronate (flat-footed) get a wedge/orthotic ● Don't tuck your knees in too close to stem as this increases tension on ITB ● Move cleat inwards ● Strengthen weak pelvic stabilisers and stretch ITB, thigh and buttock muscles
Achilles Tendon Pain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pain at back of ankle ● Pain during riding and afterwards ● Pain and tightness after inactivity or on rising in the morning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increased training intensity, hill training ● Lack of flexibility in calf muscles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strengthen Achilles tendon and calf muscle ● Improve flexibility ● Lower saddle to avoid cycling on 'tippy toes' as this loads the tendon
Hip Pain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deep pain in the hip, thigh, groin and buttock areas. ● Can refer pain into leg with possible numbness and/tingling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Overtraining, pushing high gears ● Muscle imbalances in hip/pelvic region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strengthen underlying muscle imbalance ● Improve flexibility ● Gear back and increase cadence
Hand Pain 'Handlebar Palsy' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Numbness, tingling and weakness over outside of hand, little finger and outer half of ring finger ● Clumsiness in hand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wrist extended on handlebars for prolonged periods, weight of rider pushing through wrist and vibrations from road applies pressure to ulnar nerve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Alternate hand positions during ride ● Shorten stem and sit up more to reduce weight on wrists ● Gel padded gloves and padded handlebars reduce pressure
Burning Feet 'Metatarsalgia' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Painful burning feet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Long hilly rides, hot weather ● Tight shoes – compressing nerves and impeding circulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wider shoes ● Move cleats closer to the heel to reduce pressure on forefoot ● Larger platform pedal ● Supportive inner soles and thermo-regulating socks

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