Leg Cramps

Leg cramps that occur during exercise can be caused by poor circulation. However, muscle cramps that occur at rest or during the night are usually not due to any serious medical problem. Heat cramps may cause muscle spasms during hot weather.

CAUSE

There is no clear cause for muscle cramps. However, dehydration may be a factor for those who exercise in the heat. Imbalances in the level of sodium, potassium, calcium or magnesium in the muscle tissue may also be a factor.

TREATMENT

- Make sure your diet has enough fluids and essential minerals for the muscle to work normally.
- Avoid strenuous exercise for several days if you have been having frequent leg cramps.
- Stretch and massage the cramped muscle for several minutes.
- Some medicines may be helpful in some patients with night cramps. Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines as directed by your caregiver.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Your leg cramps become worse.
- Your foot becomes cold, numb or blue.

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