

Muscle Pains and Cramps

What are Muscle Pains and Cramps?

Almost everybody suffers with muscles pains and cramps, but these usually resolve within a few days. However, sometimes they can last for much longer. Muscle pain (myalgia) ranges from mild to severe, and can affect any part of the body, especially the legs, back, arms and neck.

Signs and Symptoms

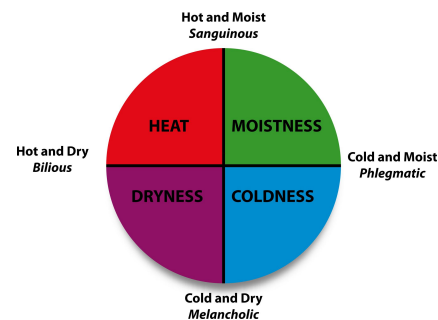
Sudden muscle cramp, especially of the legs during sleep; muscle pain or soreness, especially after exercise; and a muscle strain which may last several days.

What Causes Muscle Pains and Cramps

The most common causes of muscle pain are tension, stress, overuse, and minor injuries. Muscle cramps may occur because of disharmony in the skeletal muscles, often due to deficiency of mineral like calcium. People taking the conventional drugs statins to reduce high cholesterol often complain about muscle pain. Lactic acid build-up from over-exercising can also result in muscle pain.

The Tibb View of Muscle Pains and Cramps

According to Tibb, muscle pain and cramp is associated with **qualities of dryness with cold**. Chronic muscle pain may result when the person's skeletal muscle is overused. This overuse increases the quality of heat, which over time increases dryness and eventually cold. Insufficient heat due to decreased blood supply to the muscles can result in chronic inflammation of the muscles. When blood flow to the skeletal muscle is impaired, pain usually results. Although all temperamental types can be affected with muscle pain and cramps, people with a melancholic dominant/sub-dominant temperament are more at risk due to their innate qualities of coldness and dryness.



Management of Aucle Pain and Cramps

Management is aimed at **reducing the excess dryness with cold** qualities associated with muscle pain and cramp, by implementing Tibb Lifestyle Factors that will **increase the qualities of heat and moistness**. This assists Physis in addressing both the symptoms and the causes of muscle pains and cramps.

Tibb Lifestyle Factors

Food and Drink

- Eat mostly **Hot & Moist foods** - such as banana, sweet potato, and brown bread, **followed by Cold & Moist foods** - like butternut, carrots, pumpkin and pears.
- Eat **less of Hot & Dry foods** - such as avocado, garlic, onion and chickpeas, and the **least amount of Cold & Dry foods** - like beef, tomato, beans and mealie meal.
- Drink lukewarm water, which often helps to relieve symptoms, especially pain and soreness.
- Consume plenty of fruit and vegetables to increase moistness.
- Avoid dehydrating drinks (such as coffee, tea and alcoholic drinks), and sugar-rich fizzy drinks.

Other Lifestyle Advice

- **Breathing:** Early morning breathing exercises will help relax the affected muscles.
- **Exercise:** Rest the affected limb horizontally to allow inner healing to take place. Carry out gentle stretching exercises of the affected limb when warmed up. Do not return to physical activity until cramps have gone.
- **Resting:** Cut down physical activity by resting the muscles of the affected limbs horizontally.
- **Meditation:** Short meditation session will help deal with lasting symptoms, especially pain
- **Elimination:** Boost regular bowel movements by eating high-fibre grains (e.g. brown rice, whole-wheat, oats)
- **General:** Keep warm generally, using heating pads if necessary, especially at night.

Herbal Remedies

- **Herbal** - Add $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of turmeric to 1 cup of hot milk. Add a pinch of black pepper and honey to taste. Drink this twice daily.
- **Detox** - Add Epsom salts to bathwater to help remove toxins and soothe inflamed muscles.

