



What is it?

Bursitis is the inflammation of a bursa (a fluid filled sac that acts as a cushion between bones and soft tissue). This is often a result of repetitive strain. There are various bursae all over your body. Some of the more common in the lower body include:

Greater Trochanteric Bursitis

Affects one of three bursae surrounding the hip

Infrapatellar Bursitis

Affects one of two portions of the knee

Retrocalcaneal Bursitis

Affects the bursa behind the Achilles' tendon

What do people experience?

In general, people experience warmth and swelling in afflicted area:

Greater Trochanteric Bursitis

- Lateral (outer) hip pain
- Deep pain

- “Snapping” sound at the outside of the hip
- Worse when on feet and engaged in activity

Infrapatellar Bursitis

- Anterior knee pain
- Increased pain with knee movement
- Difficulty on stairs
- Increased pain at night

Retrocalcaneal Bursitis

- Pain at the back of the heel, just above the Achilles’ tendon insertion
- Pain after periods of rest
- Pain with pointing toes
- History of activity on inclines

Symptoms can vary in intensity between individuals, and there may be periods of time where symptoms are more intense than others.

Risk factors and how to avoid discomfort

- Repetitive activities (jumping, running)
- Work involving a kneeling position
- Activities on inclines (hiking, hill training, etc.)
- Tight calf muscles (gastroc, soleus)

What can you do to feel better today?

Various options are available in the treatment of bursitis. Treatment is largely focused on reducing inflammation of the bursa, thus reducing pain, and treating any infections as needed. Conservative treatments include exercises, massage, footwear, footwear modifications, and foot orthoses. These can be discussed with physiotherapists, kinesiologists, massage therapists, pedorthists, and other healthcare professionals. Medications and more invasive treatments, such as injections and surgery, can be discussed with your family doctor.

Staying active with a plan

Staying active with bursitis means modifying activity to reduce the stress on the affected area. Higher impact activities should be avoided to reduce the direct impact pressure, as well. Choosing appropriate footwear can assist in adjusting biomechanics from the level of the foot. With retrocalcaneal bursitis, choosing a higher heel height in shoes can reduce the strain from the calf musculature. Orthoses, either custom or OTS, may be added to footwear to increase the amount of control of biomechanics to reduce strain as much as possible.

DON'T LET BURSITIS GET YOU DOWN. GET BACK ON YOUR FEET, TODAY.

To feel better, read on!

How can SoleScience help you feel better?

A visit with a SoleScience pedorthist will involve a full assessment. This may include:

- Static alignment
- Dynamic movement testing
- 2D gait analysis
- 3D gait analysis
- Pedograph scans (Harris Mat)
- Footwear analysis and education
- 3D foot casting

The pedorthists at SoleScience are eager to work with you to begin improving your symptoms right away. While waiting for your custom foot orthoses to be manufactured (3 to 5 business days), your pedorthist will discuss possible changes to footwear and activity to help you feel better as soon as possible.

It is important to remember that each person is different in the amount of correction they can tolerate. Adjustments are completely normal and your pedorthist will always be more than happy to see you in the office until you are happy and comfortable in your new custom foot orthoses.

Our take on the need for custom foot orthoses

The use of custom foot orthoses with bursitis depends greatly on the cause of the injury and the biomechanics of the individual. Often, an overuse injury such as bursitis is a result of poor mechanics over a long period of time. In this case, custom foot orthoses can help control poor mechanics, such as too much “pronation” (your foot rolling in), thus reducing internal rotation of the lower limbs and assisting in alignment. This works to offload injured areas through proper mechanics, reducing strain on tissues and improving pain symptoms.

Custom vs. OTS

OTS, or off the shelf foot orthoses, are prefabricated devices that are fit to your foot and shoe in the store and are often somewhat customizable. Custom foot orthoses are manufactured specifically to a mold of your foot and designed to suit your specific needs. The use of either OTS or custom foot orthoses depends greatly on the length and severity of the condition as well as individual mechanics. OTS foot orthoses may be enough to control poor biomechanics in order to offload the affected bursa. In cases where OTS has not worked, or poor mechanics are excessive, custom devices will be able to provide that extra bit of support, specific to your foot.

Footwear recommendations

Having a properly fitted shoe is important for any kind of bursitis. This is because footwear can help control any excessive biomechanics, aiding the reduction of strain on different bursa. With regard to retrocalcaneal bursitis, it’s important to ensure that the heel counter does not add too much pressure to the area but allows enough control so the shoe is not sloppy.