CHEAT SHEET

The 8 Most Common Cycling **Injuries** and How to Avoid Them

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INJURY	SIGNS & SYMPTOMS	COMMON CAUSES	TIP
Knee Pain	 Pain in/under the kneecap Worse going up and down hills/stairs Worse after prolonged sitting 	 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 	 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	 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 	 Mechanical factors like poor bike posture, hunching over handlebars Lack of flexibility Weak core muscles 	 Improve flexibility Core strengthening Alternate postures whilst riding to reduce load on spine Check leg length discrepancy
Neck Pain	 Pain along back and sides of neck Can refer pain to shoulder tips and down between shoulder blades 	 Poor bike posture – excessive hyperextension (looking up) of the neck Weak stabilising muscles of neck 	 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	 Pain and tenderness on outside of knee Occasionally swelling Pain walking up and down stairs Stiffness after inactivity 	 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 	 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	 Pain at back of ankle Pain during riding and afterwards Pain and tightness after inactivity or on rising in the morning 	 Increased training intensity, hill training Lack of flexibility in calf muscles 	 Strengthen Achilles tendon and calf muscle Improve flexibility Lower saddle to avoid cycling on 'tippy toes' as this loads the tendon
Hip Pain	 Deep pain in the hip, thigh, groin and buttock areas. Can refer pain into leg with possible numbness and/tingling 	Overtraining, pushing high gearsMuscle imbalances in hip/pelvic region	 Strengthen underlying muscle imbalance Improve flexibility Gear back and increase cadence
Hand Pain 'Handlebar Palsy'	 Numbness, tingling and weakness over outside of hand, little finger and outer half of ring finger Clumsiness in hand 	 Wrist extended on handlebars for prolonged periods, weight of rider pushing through wrist and vibrations from road applies pressure to ulnar nerve 	 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'	Painful burning feet	 Long hilly rides, hot weather Tight shoes – compressing nerves and impeding circulation 	 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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