

## Nocturnal Leg Cramps

### ***What are they?***

- **Sudden tightening of leg/foot muscles at night or at rest; may awaken you from sleep**
- **Painful, lasting seconds – minutes**

### ***Who gets them?***

- **People who are middle aged and older are more likely to get leg cramps**
- **As many as 70% of elderly may experience nocturnal leg cramps at some point in their life**

### ***What Can Cause Nocturnal leg cramps?***

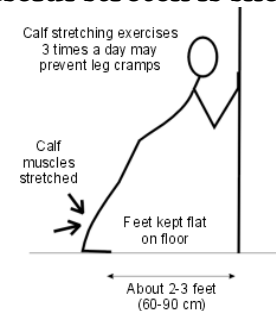
- **There are many different possible causes of leg cramps:**
- **Overuse of muscles, standing on concrete for too long, sitting in one position for too long, and wearing uncomfortable shoes can put you at risk for developing leg cramps**
- **Fluid/chemical/hormone problems, dehydration, poor blood flow to legs, diabetes, nerve problems**

***Are there medications that I am taking that may be causing my leg cramps?***

- **Although there are many different medications that can cause leg cramps, a few of the more common medications include:**
  - A. diuretics (such as hydrochlorothiazide)**
  - B. beta agonists (such as isoproterenol)**
  - C. beta blockers (such as atenolol, metoprolol, propranolol)**
  - D. ACE inhibitors (such as lisinopril, captopril)**
- **Patients who experience leg cramps should discuss their medications with their doctor.**

***If I already have a leg cramp, how can I make it go away?***

- **There are several things that you can try to help with leg cramps:**
- **Walk on or jiggle affected leg, then raise it into air**
- **Hot shower/warm bath/ice/massage/movement**
- **Stretch leg muscles: while sitting down grab foot by toes and pull toes towards your chest. Another useful stretch is shown below:**



[www.patient.co.uk/showdoc/23068794/](http://www.patient.co.uk/showdoc/23068794/)

***What can I do to possibly prevent Nocturnal Leg Cramps?***

- **Drink 6-8 glasses of water daily**
- **Ride exercise bike for few minutes before bed**
- **Keep blankets loose at foot of bed**
- **Wear comfortable shoes**
- **Apply heating pad for 10 minutes before sleep**
- **Eat well balanced diet that provides Vitamin A, Vitamin E, Calcium, Magnesium, Potassium**
- **Cut back on sugar and caffeine as these may interfere with your body's ability to absorb vitamins**
- **Drink 8-16 ounces of tonic water daily as it contains Quinine which may help relieve muscle cramps**
- **Stretch leg muscles regularly**

***What do I do if nothing helps with my leg cramps?***

- **There are medications that your doctor can prescribe that may help with severe leg cramps. If cramps continue after trying the above suggestions, contact your doctor.**

**Have you been living with Nocturnal Leg Cramps?**



[www.cartuin.net/jpegs/xo2.jpg](http://www.cartuin.net/jpegs/xo2.jpg)

**There are things you can do to finally find some relief and sleep through the night.**