

## **Muscle cramps.**

One night of November 86, along with my friend Juan Díaz, excellent 5,000 and 10,000 meters Venezuelan runner, we went for dinner with the rest of the cross country team of the Western State University of Colorado, that dinner was at restaurant in the outskirts of Chicago, the city where we had spent the night after our participation in the NAIA's national cross-country championship, which was held at that time in the border state of Wisconsin. The distance race assistant coach of the university, Joe Winegardner was driving a van, while Dr. Duane Vandebusch, the track and field Chief Coach of was by his side, in the back seats of the van were seated Juan and me, and some team mates. Suddenly, Juan gave a scream of pain, manifesting an intense pain in his calf, which was going away intensifying more and more, while some team mate girls and other fellow runners made efforts to calm Juan. Immediately our team the therapist approached us and proceeded to apply a series of techniques and manipulations that they minimized the pain of my friend, who for a long time after the incident was still walking with obvious signs of pain. That was the first time I knew what a muscle cramp was.

Muscle cramps are some of the most recurrent conditions in runners in endurance events such as the 21km races and the marathons, and even so. , I still do not know is unknown the exactly reason why this happens and therefore what would be the treatment suitable for this type of contingency which can occur for different reasons.

Muscle cramps occur when suddenly a muscle contracts tightly from a muscle without the person suffering it being the one who causes it to contract, and they can be present in one or more muscle groups, being the most committed those in the posterior part leg at calf level, in front and back of the thighs and in rare occasions in the lower part of the foot. They can be caused by inadequate training, poor hydration that can lead to an excessive loss of salts and minerals, some health conditions, excessive humidity, heat or cold, by some medications and other treatments, including some hereditary factors. However, the most common are those produced by heat and humidity. The decrease in sodium concentration in blood and the loss of fluid at the cellular level It also seems to be a cause for muscle cramps to appear, but seems to be that the most important factor that lead the distance runners to a cram episode is a poor physical conditioning of the muscles involved in the race.

When suffering a cramp it is recommended:

Gradually stretch the muscle involved.

Take a rest from running to allow a completed muscular recovering.

Hydrate, preferably with an energy drink as you train or compete in places warm and humid causes that you lose a lot of liquids, salts and minerals; as the calcium, potassium, and others.

Apply ice or heat.

Elevate the affected area in order to avoid edema.

Get a massage by specialized people.

As prevention, perform stretching exercises to make your muscles strongest, more flexible and elastic. However, for people who start in the activity of running or with little experience it is best to strengthen their muscles from the beginning to the end of make them more fit and ready for races.

Run according to your possibilities because if you run over your potential probably you will fatigue your muscles are they could cramping.

To prevent dehydration, drink enough liquid before, during and after doing exercises.

Maintain a diet rich in fruits, vegetables and cereals, so it is convenient to have a nutritional advice from experts in the field.

If you notice excessive redness, edema in extremities, a lot of pallor, severe pain or any symptom that may put your health at risk goes to the doctor as soon as possible.

Remember, it is not known exactly when you can suffer a muscle cramp, however, taking the necessary measures to avoid its appearance is the key.