

Dr. Colin Gage * Dr. Duane Drobot

Nicola Valley Chiropractic
1949 Quilchena Ave.
P.O. Box 909
Merritt, BC
V1K 1B8

Ph: (250) 378-5456
Fax: (250) 378-8259
Email: info@merrittchiro.com
Website: www.merrittchiro.com

"treating the cause of your problem, not just the symptoms"

Leg Cramps

Have you ever been sleeping quietly or relaxing on the couch after a hard day at work, only to be jolted awake by a painful leg cramp? Well, you are not alone. Nearly everybody has experienced a painful leg cramp at some point in his or her life. The journal "Postgraduate Medicine" mentions that the tendency to have cramps may run in families. Pregnant women seem to be prone to muscle cramps because the needs of the developing baby throw off their balance of body fluids. The journal also mentions that people who exercise for long periods of time or very intensely will throw off their balance of water, sodium, potassium, lactic acid, and glucose, which affects muscle contractions.

If you have severe leg pain, you must be able to tell if what you feel is just an ordinary muscle cramp. If you suspect the pain is caused by something else, see your medical doctor or chiropractor immediately. This is a brief description of what a muscle cramp should feel like:

- they are usually in the leg or foot, and occur during rest or sleep.
- the cramps do not occur in both legs at the same time.
- the muscle often twitches for a few seconds before and after the cramp.
- intense pain comes on suddenly and is usually relieved by standing on or stretching the leg or foot.
- a knot in the muscle is often seen or felt.
- sometimes the affected muscle is tender for a few days.

It may not be possible to prevent these cramps completely. However, it will decrease their occurrence by stretching the affected muscles regularly. It would also help if you drink enough water during and after exercising to replace what you lost as sweat.

Ordinary muscle cramps cause no permanent harm. However, if symptoms persist or you think that the pain is not just a muscle cramp, have it examined by a medical doctor or chiropractor.