

M2 Get a Grip!

Ever since I first began running I have been a magnet for running injuries. Feet that are not bio-mechanically well-constructed produced a never-ending list of aches and pains; some annoying, others debilitating and long-lasting.

Shin splints, fascial releases, chronic muscle pulls in hamstrings and calves, achilles tendon issues, knee pain, SI joint pain, etc. I often joke that I got my degree physical therapy first-hand.

I first heard about e3 grips www.biogrip.com two years ago when I was battling through an endless series of calf and hamstring muscle strains. Calf muscle would be feeling great, I'd be running easily, and then ZAP!, out of the blue, the muscle would zing and I'd be walking home. Ditto for the hamstring.

My running routine consisted of jogging 90" laps around a soccer field where I would walk every 3-4' to rest the hamstring so it would not spasm and send me home depressed yet again. I had worked up to almost 20' of walk/run, but my state was very precarious and the muscle was always on edge.

Enter Stephen Tamaribuchi, who I had heard about from a friend who knew an elite runner whose chronic calf pulls disappeared by running with these silly grip things. Stephen was in the area of my home and paid me a visit.

Stephen led me through a series of strength and stepping exercises with and without the grips and the difference was so striking that I called in my wife to observe, or as I said to Stephen, to see if she could detect whatever trick he must be doing to produce such different results simply by holding these grips! No tricks were discernible to my wife either.

The next evening I ventured over to the soccer field with my purchased grips to do my 3' jog, 1' walk routine and hoped to add up to 20'. Amazingly, I found myself running 30' continuous and at a faster pace than my previous jogs under the cover of darkness.

Curious as to the explanation for this quantum leap forward in my running, I put the grips down and ran some more. Within 2' the hamstring was sending warning signals...not good, so I stopped. Still curious however, I picked up the grips again and began jogging gingerly---no hamstring tension. Fifteen solid-paced minutes later I stopped running and was exhilarated.

Since that time, I have never in my life run so consistently and worry-free. **I NEVER run without the grips unless I somehow have not placed them in my bag.** Those few annoying times that this has occurred, it was striking how out of sync my stride felt running grip-less.

Stephen's technical explanation as to how the grips help a runner is as follows:

"The e3 grips help modify mechanical behavior throughout the body by placing the shoulder and hip girdles in more inherently stable positions and the axial skeleton in a balanced vertical alignment."

My own sense in running with the grips is that everything just seems to line up better and my overall stride and arm swing compacts into a tight, efficient unit. I feel better balanced and with the elimination of extraneous movement my muscles work more easily in moving me forward as they do not have to compensate for strains outside of my specific exercise pattern.

In the simplest of terms, I do not feel like I am walking on eggshells each time I venture out the door to do a run.

Many of the athletes that I coach who have suffered from similar annoying injury patterns will tell you similar stories. We do laugh at ourselves, and jokingly remind each other to hold crystals as

well, but bottom-line is that these things work.