

Muscle Cramps

Also called: Charley horse

Muscle cramps are sudden, involuntary contractions or spasms in one or more of your muscles. They often occur after exercise or at night, lasting a few seconds to several minutes.



You have probably had a muscle cramp before. It is a very common muscle problem.

Muscle cramps can be caused by nerves that malfunction. Sometimes this malfunction is due to a health problem, such as a spinal cord injury or a pinched nerve in the neck or back.

Other causes are:

- Straining or overusing a muscle
- Dehydration
- A lack of minerals in your diet or the depletion of minerals in your body
- Not enough blood getting to your muscles

Cramps can be very painful. Stretching or gently massaging the muscle can relieve this pain.

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