



### **35. Treating Painful Leg Cramps**

If you've pushed your muscles to the limit you may have experienced painful leg cramps, and you know how sudden and intense the pain can be.

Among the causes of leg cramps are dehydration, use of diuretics and overuse of muscles. Here some things you can do to help ease the pain of leg cramps.

- Stretch and massage--Slowly straighten your leg and point your toes upward, while gently rubbing the cramp to help the muscle relax.
- Stand up--For a calf cramp, put your weight on the "cramped" leg and bend your knee slightly. For a thigh cramp, keep both legs straight and lean forward at the waist. Use a chair to steady yourself.

If you have persistent leg cramping you may want to try taking 300 I.U. of vitamin E on a regular basis. Studies have shown positive relief for patients with various types of leg cramps that used vitamin E. Also increasing the amount of potassium in the diet has shown positive results. Excellent sources of potassium include: potatoes, celery, bell peppers, apricots, cantaloupes, grapefruits, orange juice, and papayas.