

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU GET A STITCH?

➔ Owww it hurts, eurrgh I can't ride any more, must get off...



When we asked for a shot of Steve in stitches, this isn't quite what we meant...

There are different types of stitches (pains you experience in the tummy area) Food can be a common cause, if you eat too close to hard exercise your body will have to transfer blood to the working muscles and as a result blood will leave the stomach leaving undigested food sitting there. So the answer to this one is leave at least 90 minutes after a meal before exercising.

You will need to experiment with this, as some people need more time than others. If you are intending to eat during long periods of riding look at using energy drinks, bars and gels which have been specially

made to aid digestion and release energy fast.

If it's not to do with food it's probably a side stitch. This type of stitch occurs when you're riding at very high intensity and breathing is uncomfortable. The diaphragm muscle contracts in a shortened position and never really gets the chance to fully lengthen. Full lengthening will only occur when you exhale fully and then the stitch will start to disappear. You must breathe out forcefully and try to empty your lungs completely. If you try to keep a good breathing rhythm with deep breaths all the time you can avoid this type of stitch happening.