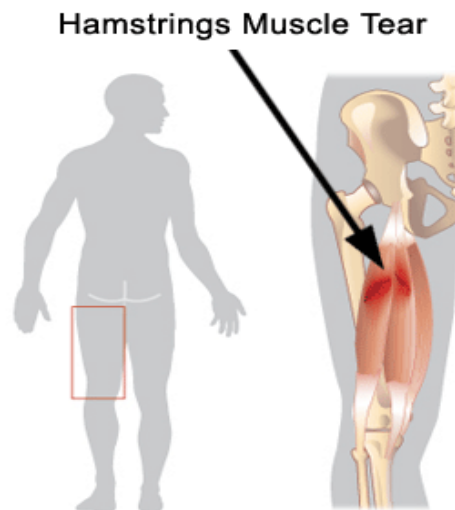


Hamstring Strain

Hamstring strain is an injury to the muscle group in the back of the thigh. A strain is a stretch or tear of the muscle or tendon, commonly referred to as a “pulled” muscle. This occurs when the muscles are forcefully contracted during activities such as running and jumping.

What are the symptoms?

Hamstring strains typically feel like a pull or tightness in the back of the thigh. With more severe cases, you may feel a pop and burning sensation but the athlete will still be able to walk with mild pain. Depending on the severity of the hamstring strain, there may be some apparent swelling and bruising in the back of the thigh along the hamstring muscle group.



Hamstring strains can be aggravated by forceful stretching, sprinting or other fast motions with the legs. It most often occurs in running, jumping and kicking sports. It may also be due to low levels of fitness and poor flexibility. Not warming up properly can also contribute to hamstring strains.

Treatment

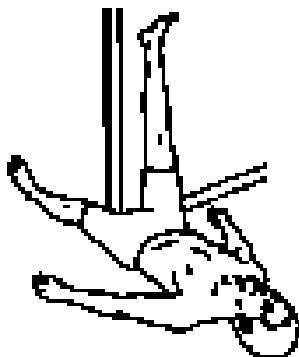
You can treat hamstring strains in a number of ways.

The first step is calming down inflammation. Stop any aggravating activities to allow sore areas to rest. Over the counter anti-inflammatories, taken as directed, as well as ice can help relieve pain and swelling. Icing can be done as follows:

- Apply a commercial cold pack or a bag of frozen vegetables to the affected area for 20 minutes. Allow 40 minutes before re-icing.

After settling down the inflammation, specific exercises are important to help relieve pain and allow you to return to pain-free activities.

Stretching: Hamstring – Wall: Lying on floor with injured leg on wall, other leg through doorway, scoot buttocks toward wall until stretch is felt in back of thigh. As leg relaxes, scoot closer to wall. Hold 30 seconds. Repeat 3 times per set. Do 2 sessions per day.



Supine Hamstring Stretch with Strap: Place a strap around the foot, use your arms to raise your leg up in the air with a straight knee until a strong but comfortable stretch is felt behind the thigh. Hold for 30 seconds. Perform 3 times, 2 times per day.



Prone Knee Flexion Strengthening: Bend your injured knee so that your heel comes toward your buttocks. Bring it back down to starting position. Repeat 10 times per set. Do 3 sets per session. Do 1 session per day.



Bicycling and swimming are good alternatives to running, allowing you stay active without aggravating symptoms. The use of an elastic wrap around the thigh can add support and help with any inflammation. When returning to running, proper footwear is also important.

If your symptoms persist or become more severe, you may need to follow up with an orthopaedic specialist. Call 630-225-BONE to schedule an appointment with a physician from OAD Orthopaedics.

Disclaimer: * This information should NOT be used in place of visit with your healthcare provider, nor should you disregard the advice of your health care provider because of any information you read in this topic.