



Understanding Hamstring Tears

ESSENTIAL PHYSIOTHERAPY

Let's get clued up on hamstring strains; why you may have one, what you can do to help and how to prevent a future injury. The hamstrings are a group of three muscles; the biceps femoris, semimembranosus and semitendinosus. You can feel these muscles if you place your hands on your sitting bones where the muscles originate and slide your hands down the back of your legs. The main action of these muscles is to bend your knee, take your leg out behind you and to assist rotation of your knee, especially when performing accelerating and decelerating actions.

A strain/pull/tear is when the muscle fibres are overstretched. Injuries are frequently felt as a short sharp pain in the back of your thigh whilst exercising. A hamstring strain will typically happen when running just before your foot hits the ground. At this point, the hamstrings are working eccentrically to control the forward motion of the two lower leg bones, your tibia and fibula. Pain is often the most debilitating symptom affecting your ability to continue exercising and may cause a limp. Other symptoms include swelling, bruising, muscle spasm and reduced movement at your knee.

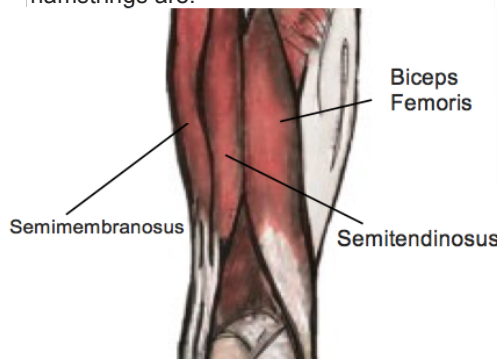
Strains can be categorised into 3 different grades. 1 being the mildest with a small number of fibres being torn to grade 3 being the most severe which can be a complete muscle rupture. The good news is muscles have a fantastic blood supply and should heal within 3-12 weeks depending on the degree of injury. However, the flexible skeletal muscle fibres, which your muscles are made up of, are replaced with much more inflexible tough scar tissue, which is where physio's come in. Specific rehabilitation such as specialist stretching, strengthening, taping and soft tissue techniques can dramatically influence how muscle fibres are restructured reducing the amount of scar tissue speeding up the healing process helping you return to sport quicker. With

any soft tissue injury, R.I.C.E (rest, ice, compression, elevation) should always be your first response.

A physio will be able to perform a thorough assessment and educate you on why you sustained a hamstring strain in the first place. Common factors that can predispose you to hamstring strains are not warming up or cooling down properly, tight hamstrings or hip flexors, weak hamstrings or gluteal (butt) muscles, training at a high intensity without adequate training or altered biomechanics.

Runners often have short, weak hamstrings, tight hamstrings will restrict the length of your strides when running meaning you have to work harder to cover the same distance as you would with adequately lengthened hamstrings. Chronically tight hamstrings can cause not only hamstring strains but can contribute to back pain, knee pain and leg length discrepancies. So even if you have never stretched before it may be a good time to start stretching!

So to prevent yourself pulling a hammy make sure you warm up and cool down properly including effective stretching of not just your hamstrings but hip flexors, quadriceps and calf muscles, do sport specific strength and conditioning and avoid sudden increases in intensity of exercise. On your next visit why not ask your physio and find out how healthy your hamstrings are.



Brain Teasers

1. A boy has as many sisters as brothers but each sister has only half as many sisters as brothers. How many brothers and sisters are there in the family?

2. 'I have ten or more daughters', 'I have less than ten daughters', 'I have at least one daughter'. If only one of these statements is true, how many daughters do I have?

3. I have streets but no sidewalks. I have towns but no houses. I have mountains but am all the same height. I have rivers and oceans but am completely dry.

What am I?

PhysioTip

Backwards running has been shown to prevent knee pain and prevent hamstring injuries

Hip Pain and Labral Tears

What are labral tears of the hip?

If you are experiencing pain in the front of your hip along with clicking, locking or catching of your hip joint you may have underlying labral damage. The acetabular labrum is a fibrous rim of cartilage that covers and seals your hip socket. This lining of cartilage provides stability for the thigh bone (femur) inside of the hip socket (acetabulum).

The labrum seals the hip socket, providing a suitable appropriate rotational axis for the thigh bone in the hip socket as well as helping to maintain the nutritional fluid within the joint that is important to maintain joint health.

How do they happen?

Labral tears can occur from an injury such as a twist or slip, or damage can occur from repetitive stresses. Anatomical changes in normal hip movement, which may also be associated with neuromuscular imbalance most commonly causing labral tears, are repetitive movements where there is decreased joint clearance between the femur and the acetabulum. For example athletes such as gymnasts and ballet dancers who have to repeatedly pivot or flex their hip are more likely to damage

their labrum than those who do not. Over time this repetitive impingement of the hip joint can cause the labrum to tear and damage to the labrum if not managed properly may lead to early degenerative arthritis.

What are the symptoms?

Pain in the front of the hip, groin, side of the hip or buttock often described as deep are symptoms of labral damage as well as clicking, locking, catching or giving away of the hip. Prolonged sitting, standing, walking or pivoting can cause pain for someone with a labral tear and this may cause a limp when walking. Other signs and symptoms include joint stiffness or a feeling of instability in your hip.

How are labral tears diagnosed?

Diagnosis is not always possible to confirm in the clinic, however, magnetic resonance arthrography (MRA) has been found to be very accurate in diagnosing labral tears. An MRA is when a dye is injected into the hip joint before the hip joint is scanned and specialist photographs of the joint are taken. Arthroscopies are another option but as they are more invasive they are often not the first port of call.

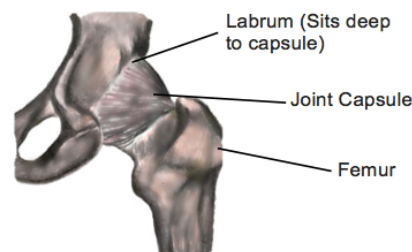
It is advised to speak to your physiotherapist about your symptoms who will gather a thorough history of your problem and may undergo a series of tests as part of the physical examination. A physiotherapist can inform you if they think

your symptoms are coming from labral damage or if they suspect a different problem.

How can physiotherapy help?

If your physiotherapist does suspect you have a labral tear, different treatment plans are available. Physiotherapy management may include a stretching and strengthening program to correct any neuromuscular imbalance; movement re-education and a variety of manual techniques that can be performed by your physiotherapist may reduce or abolish your symptoms. Other options are available or may be used in conjunction to physiotherapy including pharmaceutical medicine, corticosteroid injection and surgery and you should speak to your physiotherapist and doctor about this.

None of the information in this newsletter is a replacement for proper medical advice. Always see a medical professional for advice on your individual injury.



Answers: 1. Four brothers and three sisters 2. The answer is zero daughters. 3. A map

Japanese Pancake (Okonomiyaki)

Ingredients:

- ½ Large Cabbage
- 2 cups Flour
- 2 ½ cups of Water
- 4 Eggs
- 2 tsp. Chicken Stock Powder
- 4 Tbsp. Okonomi Sauce
- 8 large Prawns
- 1 Tbsp. Pickled Ginger
- 2 Tbsp. sliced Spring Onions
- 1 handful fresh Mint
- 3 Tbsp. Japanese Mayonnaise
- 4 slices of Lemon



1. Slice cabbage into fine pieces and set aside in a large bowl.
2. Mix flour, water and eggs in a large mixing bowl, add chicken stock and cabbage, mixing until ingredients are well combined.
3. Heat some oil to medium in a frying pan and spoon the pancake mix onto the pan to make medium sized pancakes. Cook over medium heat for about 5 minutes then flip and cook for another 3-5 minutes.
4. Pan sear prawns on high heat in a separate pan with a small amount of olive oil.
5. Prepare pancake on a plate and decorate with Okonomiyaki sauce and Japanese mayonnaise. Place cooked prawns, mint, ginger and lemon on top of pancake for garnish.

Ready to serve, makes four large pancakes.



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