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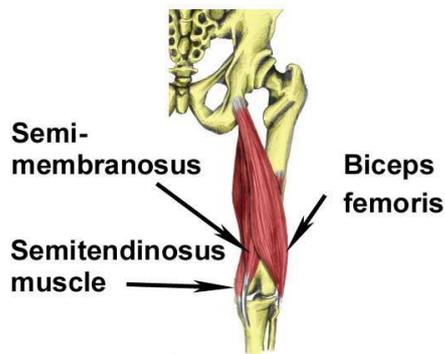
- Managing Hamstring Strains

## Managing Hamstring Strains

Hamstring strains are a common injury in a variety of sports such as football, hockey or sprinting sports. Hamstring injuries usually occur when changing running speed, kicking, and jumping. Here at **QOL Physiotherapy** we can provide a tailored sport specific rehabilitation program to get you back to being your best.

### What is a hamstring?

#### The Hamstring Muscles



The hamstring is the main muscle located at the back of your thigh, running from your pelvis to the back of your knee. The hamstring consists of a group of three separate muscles: Biceps Femoris, Semimembranosus and Semitendinosus.

The action of the hamstring is to extend (straighten) the hip and flex (bend) the knee.

### Causes of hamstring injuries

Muscle strength imbalance between your quadriceps (front thigh muscle) and your hamstring can increase your risk of a hamstring injury. The action of the quadriceps is the reverse to that of the hamstring, it bends the hip and straightens the knee. If your quadriceps has greater functional strength than your hamstring it may forcibly overstretch the hamstring, placing excessive tension on the hamstring muscles leading to damage and/or tears.

Damage to the hamstrings may also occur when a sudden movement or force is applied to the hamstring muscles. The player is immediately aware of the condition and in severe cases an audible pop is heard by the player.

#### Major risk factors:

- Previous hamstring injuries
- Increasing age of player
- Sudden acceleration, deceleration or change of direction

#### Other risk factors:

- Muscle strength imbalances (as mentioned previously)
- Hamstring fatigue
- Poor hamstring flexibility
- Poor hamstring strength
- Inadequate or inappropriate warm-up

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# QUALITY OF LIFE PHYSIOTHERAPY UPDATE



## Services Offered:

- Physiotherapy
- Back and neck care
- Sports injury management
- Orthopaedic rehabilitation
- Exercise rehabilitation
- Acupuncture
- Ergonomic assessments
- Manual handling training
- Pilates mat classes
- Living Longer Living Stronger
- Massage

## Signs and symptoms

Grade	Signs and Symptoms
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overstretched feeling, mild pain</li><li>• Still able walk, jog but perhaps with discomfort</li><li>• Normal muscle length with discomfort throughout and at end range</li><li>• Symptoms may not be present until end of physical activity</li><li>• No/minimal swelling</li></ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Partial tear of the muscle</li><li>• May walk with a limp, unable to jog without pain</li><li>• Mild to moderate pain experienced</li><li>• Mild to moderate pain during stretch, loss of muscle length</li><li>• Pain with hamstring loading</li><li>• Tender to touch and swelling may be evident</li></ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Severe tear or complete rupture</li><li>• Walk with a painful limp</li><li>• Swelling and bruising evident</li><li>• Moderate to severe pain experienced, very tender to touch, a slight depression may evident at tear site</li><li>• Loss of muscle length and strength</li><li>• Surgical intervention may be required</li></ul>

## Hamstring Management

It is important to begin hamstring treatment as soon as possible. Follow the **PRICE** principle and avoid **HARM** for the next 48-72 hours.

**P= Protect** the area from further damage

**R= Rest** the hamstring from further unnecessary loading

**I= Ice** the area, 20minutes per hour

**C= Compress** the area by wearing tight elastic bandage to help reduce swelling

**E= Elevate** the leg above heart height when possible

**H= Heat**, heating the area may increase swelling and cause further damage

**A= Alcohol**, drinking alcohol can also increase swelling, and impair balance putting you at risk of making the injury worse

**R= Rigorous** activity, abstain from activity such running and heavy loading to promote healing

**M= Massage** of the area is not advised as it can cause more bleeding and swelling

## QOL Physiotherapy

The severity of your injury will determine your rehabilitation program. Treatments include soft tissue management to reduce pain, swelling and scarring and promotion of healthy muscle growth. A progressive strengthening and stretching program is necessary for you to return to top physical activity levels. Correction of muscle imbalances and poor biomechanics is important to reduce the risk of re-injury.

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