

## MUSCLE STRAINS – “TEARS”

### What is a muscle strain?

- A strain is a partial or complete **TEAR** of a muscle.

### How do strains happen?

- Strains usually occur when muscles are suddenly contracted with a large force.
- Strains commonly occur while kicking and sprinting.



### What does it feel like?

- Strains feel like a pulling or tearing pain along a muscle. Serious tears leave gaps that you can see or feel.
- Serious tears may result in pain which increases during contraction or stretching of the area, weakness and decreased flexibility.
- **Muscle tears generally become sorer and tighter when you have cooled down.**

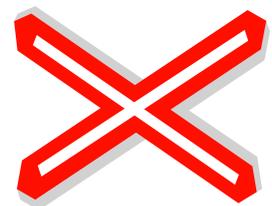
### How to initially treat a muscle strain

- The first 24-48hrs are crucial to limit swelling and decrease the severity of the injury.
- **RICE – Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation**
- A period of rest should be determined depending on the severity of the tear.
- Ice should be used as often as possible. Commonly ice is used for 20 minutes every 2 hrs.
- A compression bandage should also be applied to reduce the swelling.
- If possible the area of tear should be elevated above the level of the heart to reduce swelling.



### What you should NOT do.

- **DO NOT STRETCH A TEAR!**
- Do NO HARM
- **No Heat** - Do not use spa or hot baths in the acute phase.
- **No Alcohol** – for at least 48-72hrs as it increases swelling.
- **No Running** – no strenuous activity as it will cause further damage.
- **No Massage** - for at least 48-72hrs as it will cause further damage.



### Who you should talk to

- You should seek immediate assessment and treatment by Sports Medicine professionals to assist in a speedy recovery.

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