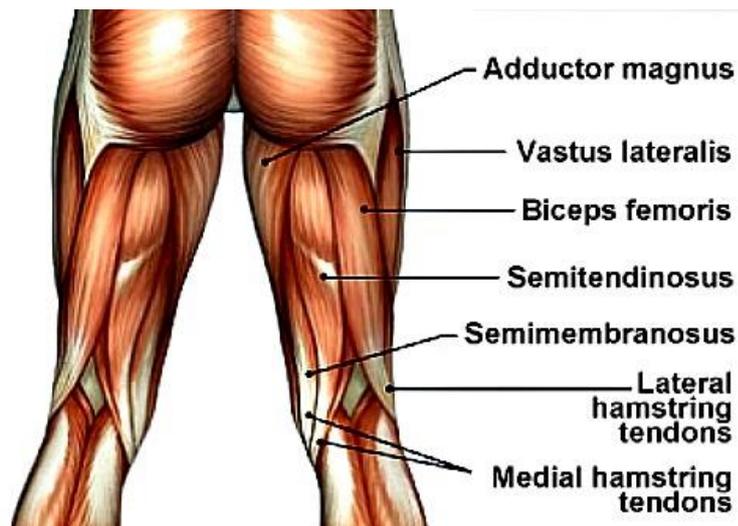


6 - Hamstring



Your Hamstring aids foot placement bends your knees, extend your legs, drives you up hills and provide that extra power as you kick towards the finish line. When they they are tight or weak to perform your really feel it. One of the essential reasons to carry out good quality warm up before any race or match **"the shorter the distance the longer the warm-up"**.

Are you at risk?

Odd as it might seem, very flexible people are more prone to hamstring troubles as overly stretched muscles in this area are more vulnerable. Long periods spent seated and as is muscle imbalance: runners tend to have quads that overpower the hamstrings, which sets them up for injury. Most hamstring injuries occur as a result of tear or spasm within muscle fibres are over stretched leading to micro-tears. Symptoms are typically local pain, stiffness, bruising and discolouration around area of tear. A muscle spasm (knot) is involuntary muscle tightening accompanied by sudden sharp pain (if not dealt with can result in minor tear).

Run through it?

Most serious hamstring injuries are experienced with sharp sudden pain especially accompanied with a "pop" or "snap", followed by bruising. This is probably a pulled hamstring and will require several weeks if not months to rest and recovery fully.

Hamstring injury can also come on gradually as muscles tire and stronger muscles "quads" become more dominant. These type of injuries (overuse) are less severe than the pulled type and generally can be managed out with combination of rest and mixed activity to improve movement and strengthen. Running is possible but only at a more relaxed easy pace with no hills and

speed work intervals for example. Cycling, swimming and aqua running are good otherday alternatives along with core and stretch routine.

If you have pulled it!

Within the first 24 hour it is important to apply;

Rest

ICE

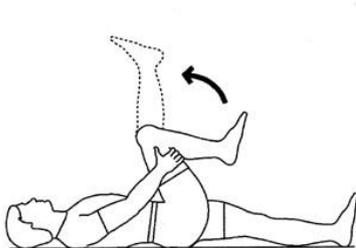
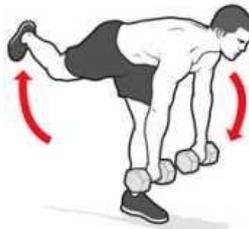
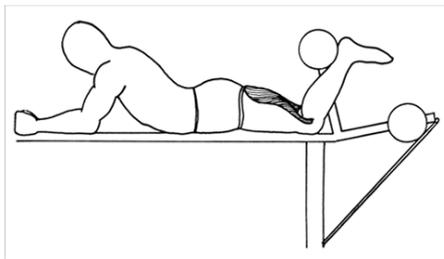
Compression

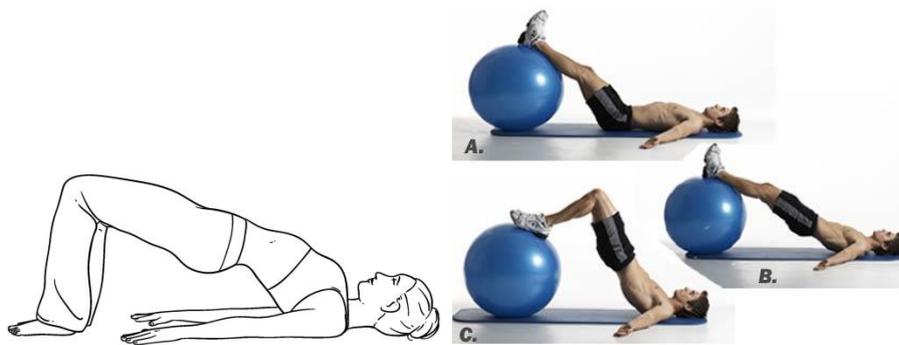
Elevation

To the area of injury this will reduce bleeding and bruising and potentially aid a quicker recover (reduce damage). Avoid stretching in the short term as this may increase tear or weaken area.

Essential rehab

Strengthen your hamstrings with single-leg curls and single leg deadlifts. Use foamroller or rolling pin to stretch out muscle fascia and alleviate tightness.





Prevention

Strengthen and Mobility are key

Carry out regular core routine for back and hamstrings include the bridge and introduce a Swiss/Fit ball to the routine. Compression tights post exercise for speeding up blood flow and recovery along with foam rolling. Build both hamstring muscle strength gradually and more dynamic movements. Always include easy warm up and some mobility movements (heel flicks, or bottom kicks, high knees, scissor kicks, side steps prior to your run especially the more demanding longer or intensive ones.

A good warm up routine is recommended prior to any intensive training/running session especially when you are working on speed or quick changes of pace or direction.



Hamstring Curl