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Common Sports Injuries: Diagnosis, Treatment & Timeline

Hamstring Tear

Definition

- A tear of the muscle fibres in the hamstring; grade 1 being a minor tear, grade 3 being a very severe tear or total rupture.

Mechanism of Injury

- Most commonly occurs during high speed running when fatigued, or during hard acceleration.

Rehabilitation

- Early rehab options: Hip bridges, single leg RDLs, squats, light jogging. Later rehab options: Higher speed build-up runs, weighted squats/single leg RDLs, long-lever hip bridges, nordic hamstring curls, 5-10m bursts of acceleration. All rehabilitation should be performed under instruction or prescription from a Chartered Physiotherapist for correct dosage and optimal recovery.

Injury Timeline

- This can vary depending on the severity of the tear, typically most hamstring tears clear up in 3-6 weeks. In severe cases it can take up to 8 weeks or more.

Dead Leg/Calf/Arm

Definition

- Significant bruising and secondary bleeding in the thigh, calf or arm.

Mechanism of Injury

- Occurs in contact sports through suffering a heavy impact (usually a knee, foot, elbow or fist) to the thigh, calf or arm.

Rehabilitation

- Regular stretching, icing, walking or other light exercise that maintains movement through it. Mild cases are manageable without the oversight of a Chartered Physiotherapist.

Injury Timeline

- Dead legs usually clear up in a couple of days up to a week. If you still feel pain in the area past one week, consult your local Chartered Physiotherapist or GP.

Tennis Elbow

Definition

- Tennis Elbow (or Lateral Epicondylitis) is the most common overuse injury in the elbow.

Mechanism of Injury

- It occurs from movements that require a lot of forearm supination and pronation - so heavy lifting, and in sports like tennis, badminton, squash or baseball.

Rehabilitation

- Management of tennis elbow comes down to education in load management and not to overload the joint. Some strengthening exercises can help and in some cases an elbow counterforce brace can be equipped. Rest can reduce the pain of Tennis Elbow, but for a long term solution, contact your local Chartered Physiotherapist.

Injury Timeline

- Severe Tennis Elbow can last up to 2 years, but in 90% of cases a full recovery is made within a year.

Plantar Fasciitis

Definition

- Plantar Fasciitis presents itself as pain on the bottom of the foot around the heel and arch area.

Mechanism of Injury

- Causes of plantar fasciitis are not overly clear, but it may come from beginning to exercise on hard surfaces, being overweight, a recent spike in walking/running load, wearing poorly supporting footwear.

Rehabilitation

- Reducing load on the foot and icing regularly, losing weight (if overweight), gentle stretches and using insoles or heel pads all help. It is manageable without oversight from a physio, but your Chartered Physiotherapist will be able to prescribe the quickest route to recovery.

Injury Timeline

- Plantar Fasciitis can usually clear up within 2 weeks with proper care, if pain persists past this point, contact your local Chartered Physiotherapist.

De Quervain's Tenosynovitis

Definition

- De Quervain's Tenosynovitis is a painful, inflammatory condition in the wrist.

Mechanism of Injury

- It is caused by overuse of the tendons on the side of the wrist at the base of the thumb. Golfing, playing the piano, fly fishing, carpentry, or activities by office workers and musicians can lead to De Quervain's Tenosynovitis.

Rehabilitation

- Treatment options include:
  - Icing
  - Strengthening through controlled exercises
  - Education on what aggravates it and proper load management
  - Splinting
  - Surgery, in severe cases

  See your local Chartered Physiotherapist for the best route to recovery with this condition.

Injury Timeline

- Early and effective treatment should see symptoms subsiding in 4 to 6 weeks.