

## Hamstring Injuries & Running



Hamstring injuries can be one of the most common injuries in sports and can be related to running. Despite being one of the most common injuries, the cause of the injury is still very poorly understood and requires more research. So, what do we know currently about hamstring injuries and their relationship to running? Here's what every runner should know about hamstring injuries as an endurance athlete and what to do if you experience one for yourself.

### 1. How Do I Know If I Injured My Hamstring?

Hamstring injuries are typically diagnosed by a medical professional. A medical professional will use their subjective interview with the patient, an objective examination, and possibly imaging to determine the severity of the hamstring injury. Hamstring injuries are graded on a scale from 1 to 3.

The list below provides how each grade is classified:

Grade 1: mild muscle pull/strain

Grade 2: partial tearing of the muscle

Grade 3: complete tearing of the muscle

The typical signs and symptoms of a hamstring injury may include, but are not limited to:

Sudden, sharp pain in the back of the upper leg

Feeling or hearing a pop

Swelling

Tenderness

Bruising

Pain with walking

Tenderness to touch

Weakness

Difficulty weight bearing

### 2. What Is The Cause Of A Hamstring Injury? Can I Prevent It?

As stated above, the cause of hamstring injuries still remains unknown at this time. It has been found there are some precipitating factors that should be considered. The causes that have been found include poor warm up, muscle fatigue with activity, muscular imbalance, and a limitation of hip internal rotation. While we cannot say with absolute certainty, physical therapy may help to prevent hamstring injuries from happening. Improving hip mobility and strength, as well as functional mobility of the hamstring may prevent hamstring injuries. Another important piece of prevention is education. Educating people on the importance of a good warm up and cool down, proper rest periods, and hydration and nutrition can play a critical role in preventing a hamstring injury.

### 3. When Should I Seek Care From A Medical Professional?

A hamstring injury is not commonly considered an emergency condition. Following a hamstring injury, if you have significant bruising, seek advice from an orthopedic specialist. They will perform an evaluation and determine if imaging is necessary. If there is no significant bruising, utilizing compression, ice, and rest for a few days may be appropriate.

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