

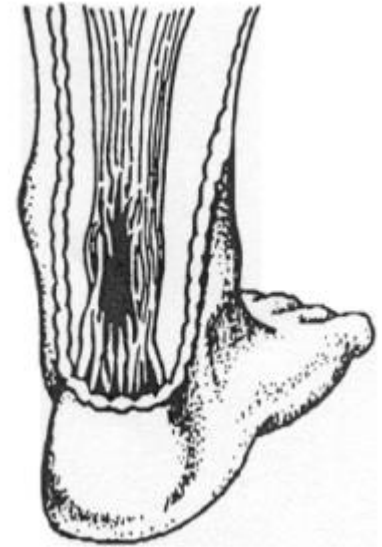


MUSCLE TENDON INJURIES

Muscle tendon injuries in sport, particularly contact sports are extremely common. So how do we manage these injuries more effectively to ensure a smooth transition back to competition? Firstly it is important to be aware that not all injuries are the same and consequently treatment varies.

A muscle can be bruised, this is commonly called a 'cork'. Usually a result of a direct blow to the muscle which causes the muscle to bleed. This bleeding can occur at different sites in the muscle from just beneath the skin to under the lining of the bone.

Another common injury to a muscle is when the fibres of the muscle tear. This is commonly termed as a 'strain'. Once again the site and severity of the strain can vary. The muscle can tear where its tendon attaches itself to the bone, in the tendon itself, where the tendon and muscle merge or in the bulk of the muscle. The tear may involve only a few muscle fibres or may result in complete disruption of a muscle or tendon eg, when an Achilles tendon ruptures.



Prevention

A number of factors can lead to a muscle tendon injury:-

1. Insufficient warm-up - hence the muscle is tight lacking ability to lengthen appropriately when the joints are moved.
2. Poor muscle strength and general loss of body fitness.
3. Variations in strength between muscles.

Forced muscle contraction in a bid to protect from an external force ie player to player contact.

Treatment

Early treatment is vital.

Initial soft tissue management based on the R.I.C.E.R. principle.

Being aware of what not to do by asking your Physiotherapist about the H.A.R.M. factors.

Graduated safe return to the sporting arena.

