

Muscle Strain (Pull) Rehabilitation

Ken Laba, CanFitPro PTS, Level 1 Soccer Coach

Grade 1 Strain – mild injury, few muscle fibers torn, mild discomfort while exercising, some loss of muscle power.

Grade 2 Strain – moderate injury, many muscle fibers torn, partial loss of function, considerable loss of muscle power, some pain when trying to move muscle.

Grade 3 Strain – severe injury, all muscle fibers torn, complete loss of function and muscle power, quite painful when trying to move muscle.

Injury Rehabilitation Timeline

Injury Rehab Stage	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
1. R.I.C.E	2 days ... and when needed afterwards	3-4 days	5-7 days
2. Physiotherapy	N/A	1-2 weeks	2-4 weeks
3. Re-strengthening and stretching	1-2 days	1-2 weeks	2-3 weeks
4. Re-training	1-2 days	1-2 weeks	2-3 weeks
5. Return to full exercise	4-6 days after injury	4-7 weeks after injury	7-12 weeks after injury
6. Pre-habilitation	Regularly each week for rest of your life		

Note: The above timeline can vary somewhat depending upon how long after the injury occurred that R.I.C.E. and physiotherapy was started.

R.I.C.E. = Rest + Ice + Compress + Elevate (no activity) ASAP after injury.

Physiotherapy – Specialized treatment to recuperate injured muscle tissue and restore basic strength, flexibility and mobility.

Re-strengthening – Easy-to-challenging slower paced resistance/strength exercises of the injured muscle(s). Can be done at same time as physio.

Re-training – Easy-to-challenging faster paced power/plyometric, agility and sprinting movements, drills and exercises. Also includes continued strengthening and stretching exercises.

Return to full exercise - Return to full intensity exercise or competition.

Pre-habilitation – Keeping the injured muscle/region and kinetic chain associations strong and flexible with formal training exercises performed regularly each week in order to prevent re-injury in the future.