

So why do I suffer : recurring hamstring tightness, strains, sprains & tears

most common muscles: affected are the hamstrings, but also calf and to lesser degree the quads and IT bands... factors such as overuse, poor warm up and down, lack of strength, power or flexibility, play an important part – see below...



REASONS for

Too much too soon or too much without enough RECOVERY!

Must common cause of hamstring problems is **OVERTRAINING** – either doing too much or too hard a session that **1. You are not used to**

Or more common 2. At a time when you haven't sufficiently recovered from a particularly hard game or session

You find that on session 2 the hamstrings are tight and then session 3 they pull!!

BACK OFF!

Poor warm up

You rush to race or a game – arrive late- Or your warm up routine is poor

SOLUTIONS

PLAN your SESSIONS on a WEEKLY PLAN geared around GAME or RACE

At session post hard session or game – ease into it and **coaches listen to what players are telling you about their hamstring** and if tight then **BACK OFF** rather than have 3-4 players pull or on the verge of pulling – encourage recovery sessions individually at local pool such as aqua jogging or local gym such as light spin bike

Better warm up will get your lactic pump working more efficiently to take away waste products and transport

Less kicking about pre game or training and try gradually warming the muscles – if a sub do regular run outs

essential fuel to muscles – develop a routine that works for you or seek advice from a coach

Poor diet

Diet and hydration in days leading up to a game or race and during – this again varies for individuals – you may need to get the calculator out and see exactly what your body mass at kcal per hour needs

Thinks Kcals / sodium / potassium / fluids / water



Carbo loading night before – but also think about getting the potassium in night before – perhaps a banana before bed time

Banana with cereal that morning
Football > than 50mins your blood is out of fuel > so half time banana or the famous Man U FC 3 jaffa cakes at half time

For the endurance sports :Gels – during warm up to get into system – then on start line – during race if longer than 50mins racing – need to take 15mins before you really need it – so 90mins race – may need to drop a gel at 45 mins then 60mins

May need to experiment to find the gel and balance that suits your need
Eg. HIGH5 have an 'ANTI CRAMP' GEL

Big Efforts

Very often if you have put in a big effort during a game or race this may predispose you to cramping – tightness – pain

This can be during event race or game or very often over training due to self 'cramming' for event or perhaps poor inexperienced coaching

You may not have the fitness and will therefore pay the price – more constant steady workload will avoid problems and in cases of massive efforts try recover in the bunch etc before exerting again

Recovery for next event – prevention**

The state of the muscle going into a session will play a huge role in how you cope with the work

Try :

- ✓ Warming down post event or

you are asking of the muscles
Recovery in the days and week leading up to a big race / event / game is crucial – having tight muscles that are somewhat fatigued are going to be more prone to problems
Difficult to avoid at tournaments etc

Skins RY400 excellent investment



- ✓ **game** – another easy 15mins to get blood flow and lactate pump working easy to clear the muscles
- ✓ **Hard to do in the rain or after a bad defeat but this will stand by you**
- ✓ **recovery tights** such as the [RY400's](#) click on link - from skins with good tight fit – they are excellent – get them on as soon as you can post event etc – some pro cyclists wear them in bed at night of race This will help encourage blood flow to clear lactate before it settles
- ✓ **ICE baths** **10mins** – fill bath even with cold water – max recovery follow with skins RY400

- ✓ **Pro's have massage after every session**

Not only Prevention of hamstring problems but will aid recovery will get maximum from all muscle groups



- ✓ Do **recovery sessions** eg: bike or aqua jog next day – bike 1 hour easy cadence – may need to do each day in between if another race within days

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- ✓ **MASSAGE** – crucial for all racing athletes to have a session of deep massage each week

✓

dehydration in muscle and imbalance – most of us don't drink much in the evenings - so try drinking fluids last few hours before you go to bed [your last pee of the day should look like a nice light champagne colour – if its yellow then you are dehydrated] .

Remember alcohol may take 3-4 days to clear the muscles and may leave them dehydrated : leaves the muscle more vulnerable to micro tears, cramp but for runners, sprinters [bike or run] and footballers – to having full blown tears or ruptures.

So start recovery on the pitch – active warm down – then ice bath / protein / recovery tights / cycle next day / maybe massage

Good luck Paul McCormac