

**Days 1 to 5** RICE protocol - rest, ice, compression and elevation (never apply ice directly to the skin). This is aimed at reducing the bleeding and damage within the muscle tissue.

**Days 6 to 11** You can begin gentle hamstring stretching, sitting on the floor and slowly bending forward, sliding the hands down the thighs. The patient should stop when the tension of a stretch in the hamstring begins to be felt - the position should then be held for thirty seconds. Repetitions x 3.

This should be pain-free.

Each day you should be able to stretch a little further. Stretching helps to align the scar tissue which is forming to heal the muscle tear. This ultimately produces a stronger scar.

**Days 12 to 19** Free exercises to strengthen the hamstring muscles can begin.

Start by sitting on the floor and sliding the heel up to the bottom. Repetitions x 20, 3 times each day. If this can be done without pain, progress to the next position can be made:

lay on your front and brings the heel up to the bottom. Repetitions x 20, 3 times each day. If this can be done without pain, progress to the next position can be made:

Standing, bring the heel up to the bottom. Repetitions x 20, 3 times each day.

Hamstring stretches are also continued.

**Days 20 to 26** Intermittent jogging and walking can begin.

5 minutes at first, then build up in 5 minute increments. Once you can do 15 minutes they should build up to to half pace running.

Squats can begin - repetitions x 20, 3 times daily.

Hamstring curls using a resistance weight machine can also begin.

Everything should be pain-free.

**Day 27+** Backward running can begin.

If pain-free, you can progresses to full pace forward running.

continue stretching and strengthening exercises.

Then begin sports specific activities.