



Sports injuries

Sporting activities make specific demands on the body. Regardless of the level of preparation or participation, these demands make the athlete susceptible to injury. In addition due attention must be given to playing surfaces, footwear, clothing and equipment. Chartered Physiotherapists have specialist knowledge of sports injuries and this ensures effective management of an injury with the earliest return to full sporting participation while minimising the risk of re-injury.

Common sports injuries can be categorised according to how they happened:

- **Trauma** - direct trauma such as a blow to the thigh can cause bleeding and inflammation in the muscle (dead leg). Falling on an outstretched arm could result in a shoulder dislocation or wrist fracture. Indirect trauma as in landing awkwardly in a tackle could result in a ligament rupture (cruciate tear), muscle tear (hamstring) or a torn cartilage.
- **Overuse** - repetitive actions can strain muscles, ligaments and tendons. Common in sports with repetitive throwing/gripping such as tennis and golf. Sports with a strong rotary action as in football can result in recurrent hip and groin pain.
- **Biomechanical** - our body type has a strong bearing on our ability to cope with the demands made by sporting actions. In dynamic activities the foot is the propeller. Poor alignment of the foot will cause undue strain on the joints of the lower limb and lumbar spine.



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therapeutic exercise

Your visit to a Chartered Physiotherapist includes a detailed assessment of the injury, how it occurred, causative factors and an explanation of what has happened.

Specific treatment of the injury may include the following:

- Therapeutic exercise - stretching, strengthening, correction of muscle imbalance, postural correction and hydrotherapy.
- Manual techniques - massage, frictions, joint mobilisation and manipulation.
- Taping, bandaging and advice on suitable supports.
- Ice - to reduce swelling.
- Heat - to ease stiffness in muscles and joints.
- Electrotherapy - ultrasound, interferential, laser and shortwave all help to speed up the rate of recovery of injured tissues. Electrical stimulation of weak muscles may also be necessary.
- Biomechanical assessment and prescription of orthotics (customised insoles).

Your rehabilitation programme will be specific to your sport and may include the following:

- Advice on injury prevention.
- Advice on technique and use of equipment.
 - Advice on warm-up and cool-down.
 - Customised exercise prescriptions specific to the athlete and his/her sport.
 - Advice on earliest safe return to sport.
 - Pre-season fitness screening.

If appropriate, your physiotherapist will liaise with your doctor, hospital consultant or coach. Whether at elite or recreational level, athletes are given expert treatment and advice in the rehabilitation of sports injuries by Chartered Physiotherapists.

A Chartered Physiotherapist is a university graduate with hospital-based training who has comprehensive knowledge of how the body works and has specialist training in the diagnosis and treatment of injuries.



muscle strain



return to sport



The Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists

123 St. Stephens Green, Dublin 2, Ireland.

Telephone 01 402 2148 • Fax 01 402 2160

Email info@iscp.ie • Web www.iscp.ie


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