

# Strains

## Baylor SportsCare

### We'll give you a healthy advantage.

Baylor SportsCare provides the winning combination of education, prevention, medical coverage and sports medicine for athletes of all ages.

- Access Baylor Health Care System specialized sports medicine physicians\* and services throughout the Metroplex
- Medical coverage at games and events utilizing physicians, nurses and licensed athletic trainers
- Educational programs on injury prevention & performance enhancement
- Comprehensive medical support for groups, teams and individuals

For more information about SportsCare, or for help in finding a physician who is right for you, contact your local SportsCare representative at

(972) 512-7404

or call **1-800-4BAYLOR** and ask for "Baylor SportsCare"

\*Physicians are members of the medical staff at one of Baylor Health Care System's subsidiary, community or affiliated medical centers and are neither employees nor agents of those medical centers, Baylor University Medical Center or Baylor Health Care System. CE 12.07

## Definition

A strain is when a muscle becomes overstretched and tears. This painful injury, also called a "pulled muscle," can be caused by an accident, improper use of a muscle, or overuse of a muscle. Strains can happen suddenly or develop over time. Back and hamstring muscle strains are common.

## Causes

- Excessive physical activity or effort
- Improper warming up before a physical activity
- Poor flexibility

## Symptoms

- Pain and difficulty moving the injured muscle
- Discolored and bruised skin
- Swelling

## First Aid

- Apply ice immediately to reduce swelling. Wrap ice in a cloth; avoid using directly on the skin. Apply for 10-15 minutes hourly the first day and then every 3 to 4 hours.
- Use ice for the first 3 days, or until swelling is gone. After that, either ice or heat may be helpful.
- Rest the pulled muscle for at least a day. Keep the area elevated above the heart if possible.
- Avoid using a strained muscle while it is still painful. When the pain subsides, start activity slowly and in moderation.

## When to Contact a Medical Professional

- You are unable to move the muscle.
- The injury is bleeding
- The pain does not go away for several weeks after rest

## Prevention

- Warm-up properly before exercise, sports and strenuous activity. Proper warm-up includes a gradual build up of activity until perspiration begins. Stretch only after warming up. A cold muscle is more likely to tear during stretching.
- Keep your muscles strong and flexible through regular strength, conditioning and flexibility activities.
- Wear proper shoes and make sure to use all protective equipment



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