

Hamstring Strain: Rehab Exercises

Introduction

Here are some examples of exercises for you to try. The exercises may be suggested for a condition or for rehabilitation. Start each exercise slowly. Ease off the exercises if you start to have pain.

You will be told when to start these exercises and which ones will work best for you.

How to do the exercises

Hamstring set (heel dig)



1. Sit with your affected leg bent. Your good leg should be straight and supported on the floor.
2. Tighten the muscles on the back of your bent leg (hamstring) by pressing your heel into the floor.
3. Hold for about 6 seconds, and then rest for up to 10 seconds.
4. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

Hamstring curl



1. Lie on your stomach with your knees straight. Place a pillow under your stomach. If your kneecap is uncomfortable, roll up a washcloth and put it under your leg just above your kneecap.
2. Lift the foot of your affected leg by bending your knee so that you bring your foot up toward your buttock. If this motion hurts, try it without bending your knee quite as far. This may help you avoid any painful motion.
3. Slowly move your leg up and down.
4. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

5. When you can do this exercise with ease and no pain, add some resistance. To do this:
6. Tie the ends of an exercise band together to form a loop. Attach one end of the loop to a secure object or shut a door on it to hold it in place. (Or you can have someone hold one end of the loop to provide resistance.)
7. Loop the other end of the exercise band around the lower part of your affected leg.
8. Repeat steps 1 through 4, slowly pulling back on the exercise band with your leg.

Hip extension



1. Stand facing a wall with your hands on the wall at about chest level.
2. Keeping the knee of your affected leg straight, kick that leg straight back behind you.
3. Relax, and lower your leg back to the starting position.
4. Repeat 8 to 12 times.
5. When you can do this exercise with ease and no pain, add some resistance. To do this:
6. Tie the ends of an exercise band together to form a loop. Attach one end of the loop to a secure object or shut a door on it to hold it in place. (Or you can have someone hold one end of the loop to provide resistance.)
7. Loop the other end of the exercise band around the lower part of your affected leg.
8. Repeat steps 1 through 4, slowly pulling back on the exercise band with your leg.

Hamstring wall stretch



1. Lie on your back in a doorway, with your good leg through the open door.
2. Slide your affected leg up the wall to straighten your knee. You should feel a gentle stretch down the back of your leg.
3. Hold the stretch for at least 1 minute to begin. Then try to lengthen the time you hold the stretch to as long as 6 minutes.
4. Repeat 2 to 4 times.
5. If you do not have a place to do this exercise in a doorway, there is another way to do it:
6. Lie on your back, and bend the knee of your affected leg.

7. Loop a towel under the ball and toes of that foot, and hold the ends of the towel in your hands.
 8. Straighten your knee, and slowly pull back on the towel. You should feel a gentle stretch down the back of your leg.
 9. Hold the stretch for 15 to 30 seconds. Or even better, hold the stretch for 1 minute if you can.
 10. Repeat 2 to 4 times.
1. Do not arch your back.
 2. Do not bend either knee.
 3. Keep one heel touching the floor and the other heel touching the wall. Do not point your toes.

Calf stretch



1. Stand facing a wall with your hands on the wall at about eye level. Put your affected leg about a step behind your other leg.
2. Keeping your back leg straight and your back heel on the floor, bend your front knee and gently bring your hip and chest toward the wall until you feel a stretch in the calf of your back leg.
3. Hold the stretch for 15 to 30 seconds.
4. Repeat 2 to 4 times.
5. Repeat steps 1 through 4, but this time keep your back knee bent.

Single-leg balance



1. Stand on a flat surface with your arms stretched out to your sides like you are making the letter "T." Then lift your good leg off the floor, bending it at the knee. If you are not steady on your feet, use one hand to hold on to a chair, counter, or wall.
2. Standing on your affected leg, keep that knee straight. Try to balance on that leg for up to 30 seconds. Then rest for up to 10 seconds.
3. Repeat 6 to 8 times.
4. When you can balance on your affected leg for 30 seconds with your eyes open, try to balance on it with your eyes closed.

5. When you can do this exercise with your eyes closed for 30 seconds and with ease and no pain, try standing on a pillow or piece of foam, and repeat steps 1 through 4.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

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