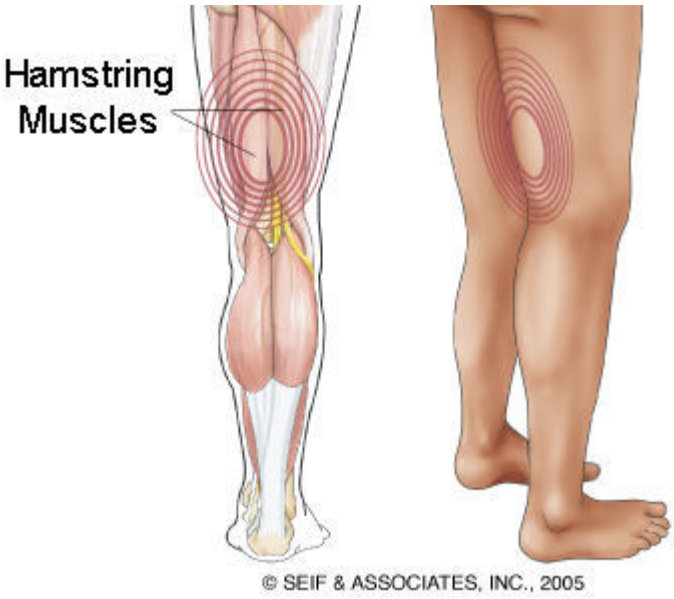
Hamstring Strain
(Strain of the Muscles in the Back of Your Thigh)

Hamstrings are muscles in the back of the thigh. A strain or tear injury happens when there is a sudden stretch or pull on these muscles and tendons. Tendons are cord like structures that attach muscle to bone. These injuries are commonly seen in activities such as sprinting. It happens with sudden acceleration.

DIAGNOSIS
Often the *diagnosis* can be made by examination.



HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS
- Apply ice to the sore area for 15 to 20 minutes, four times per day. Do this while awake for the first 2 days. Put the ice in a plastic bag, and place a towel between the bag of ice and your skin.
- Keep your knee flexed when possible. This means your foot is held off the ground slightly if you are on crutches. When lying down, a pillow under the knee will take strain off the muscles and provide some relief.
- If a compression bandage such as an ace wrap was applied, use it until you are seen again. You may remove it for sleeping, showers and baths. If the wrap seems to be too tight and is uncomfortable reapply it more loosely. If your toes or foot is getting cold or blue, it is too tight. When rewrapping your thigh, make sure the muscles in the back of your thigh are not getting larger. This could be a sign of bleeding into the muscles or area of injury.
- **For Activity:** Walk or move around as the pain allows, or as instructed. Resume full activities as suggested by your caregiver. This is often safest when the strength of the injured leg has nearly returned to normal.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:
- You have an increase in bruising, swelling or pain
- You notice coldness or blueness of your toes or foot
- Pain relief is not obtained with medications
- You have increasing pain in the area and seem to be getting worse rather than better
- You notice your thigh getting larger in size

MAKE SURE YOU:
- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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