Muscle Strain / Pulled Muscle

A pulled muscle, or muscle strain, occurs when a muscle is over-stretched. A small number of muscle fibers may also be torn. This is especially common in athletes. This happens when a sudden violent force placed on a muscle pushes it past its capacity. Usually, recovery from a pulled muscle takes 1 to 2 weeks. But complete healing will take 5 to 6 weeks. There are millions of muscle fibers. Following injury, your body will usually return to normal quickly.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- While awake, apply ice to the sore muscle for 15 to 20 minutes each hour for the first 2 days. Put ice in a plastic bag and place a towel between the bag of ice and your skin.
- Do not use the pulled muscle for several days. Do not use the muscle if you have pain.
- You may wrap the injured area with an elastic bandage for comfort. Be careful not to bind it too tightly. This may interfere with blood circulation.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver. Do not use aspirin as this will increase bleeding (bruising) at injury site.
- Warming up before exercise helps prevent muscle strains.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

There is increased pain or swelling in the affected area.

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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