

Soft Tissue Injuries

Soft tissue injuries are the most common injury in sport. Soft tissue refers to tissues that connect, support, or surround other structures and organs of the body. Soft tissue includes muscles, tendons, ligaments, fascia, nerves, fibrous tissues, fat, blood vessels, and synovial membranes.

Acute injury

Injuries that occur from a known or sometimes unknown incident. Signs and symptoms develop rapidly.

Bruise (contusion, cork)

Bruises are caused by a direct force applied to the body such as being kicked or making contact with a player and result in compression and bleeding into the soft tissue (hematoma).

Signs and symptoms: Swelling and/or discolouration.

Sprain

Sprains are caused when the joint is forced beyond its normal range of motion resulting in overstretching and tearing of the ligament that supports the joint.

Signs and symptoms: Swelling, loss of power or ability to bear weight, possible discolouration and bruising and/or sudden onset of pain.

Strain

Strains are caused by muscles over-stretching or contracting too quickly, resulting in a partial or complete tear of the muscle and/or tendon fibres.

Signs and symptoms: Swelling, possible discolouration and bruising and/or pain on movement.

Overuse Injury

Overuse injuries occur as a result of repetitive friction, pulling, twisting, or compression that develops over time.

Signs and symptoms: Will develop slowly, inflammation, pain

Treatment/Management

The immediate treatment of any soft tissue injury consists of the RICER protocol – rest, ice, compression, elevation and referral. RICE protocol should be followed for 48–72 hours. The aim is to reduce the bleeding and damage within the joint.

The No HARM protocol should also be applied – no heat, no alcohol, no running or activity, and no massage. This will ensure decreased bleeding and swelling in the injured area. This regime should be used for all ligament sprains, muscle sprains and muscle bruises.

Referral for bumps and bruises which occur in sport or physical activity, other than those which are minor is recommended

Call Armadale Central Physio on 9399 5020 assessment and treatment options