



## Hilliard Bradley High School/Memorial Middle School Sports Medicine

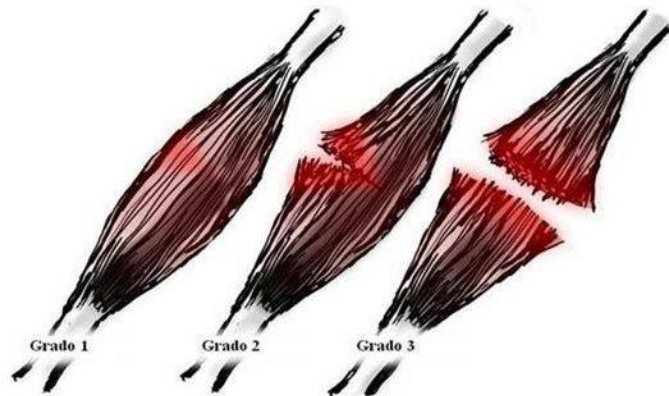
### What is a muscle strain?

Your muscles are made up of fibers. When you stretch too far or “pull” a muscle, these fibers may become overstretched and inflamed.

The majority of muscle strains are grade 1. This means that only a couple of fibers are inflamed.

Grade 2 and 3 strains occur when some of the fibers actually tear. This is called a partial muscle tear and a complete muscle tear. These are less common in high school athletics than a grade 1.

Muscle strains can cause pain, minor swelling or bruising, and loss of strength in the muscle. These are all temporary and will go away as you begin to heal.



### What causes a muscle strain?

Muscle strains occur when a muscle is “overstretched”, or stretched too far. This is a common injury in sports. Muscle strains may also occur when you are overly fatigued, or from overuse of the muscle.

### What should I do if I think I have a muscle strain?

Go see your athletic trainers. They can give you more information on your injury and can help your muscle heal quickly.

Muscle strains are commonly treated initially with rest and ice. Ice will help the inflammation in the muscle fibers slow down. You will probably also perform corrective exercises or “rehab”. These exercises help your muscles regain their strength back and heal quicker. It will also decrease your pain.

Medications such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen (Tylenol) will also help the inflammation in the muscle decrease, but ask your parent/guardian before use.

Your athletic trainers may also use other treatments to help you heal. It is important to ask questions about the treatments if you are confused or want to know more.

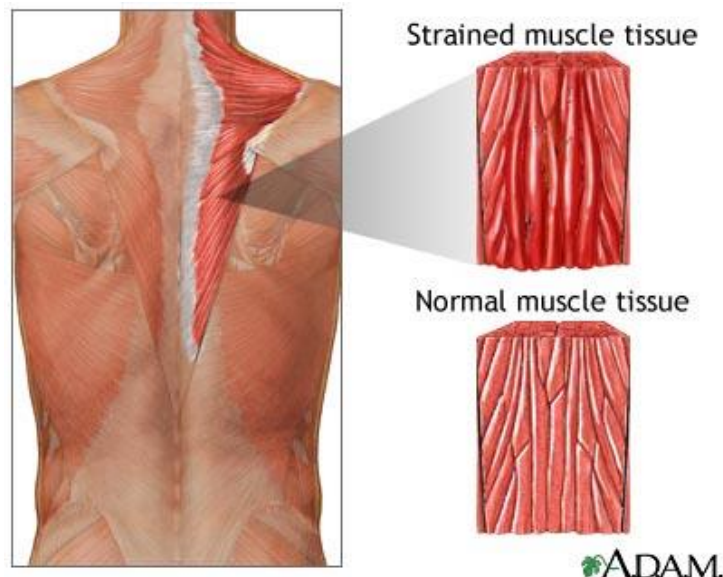
## How long will I have to sit out from my sport?

Each person is different, and so is each muscle strain. Some people may be able to participate in their sport with a minor muscle strain. Some people may have to rest for several weeks. Usually, it is somewhere in the middle, about a week. It is important to remember that if your athletic trainers and coaches are telling you that you have to rest, it is because it will help you heal and prevent your injury from becoming much worse.

## How can I prevent a muscle strain?

There are several ways to prevent a muscle strain from occurring or re-occurring. First, you should always get a good warm up before lifting, going to practice, or participating in a game. This makes sure that your muscles are ready to go. It is also important to stretch, especially after activity. This keeps your muscles flexible and prevents them from becoming overstretched during an activity. Ask your athletic trainers for more help in finding a good warm-up/cool-down program.

If you have already had a muscle strain, make sure you are continuing to perform your rehab exercises that were given to you by your athletic trainers. These exercises will help your muscles stay strong and prevent them from becoming strained again.



## What else should I know?

Most muscle strains are minor and you will usually feel better in a couple of days. It is important to tell your athletic trainer when you experience an injury so that they can help you heal. If you ignore a minor strain, it may become much worse, and can cause a more serious tear or another injury. If you have any questions, just ask!