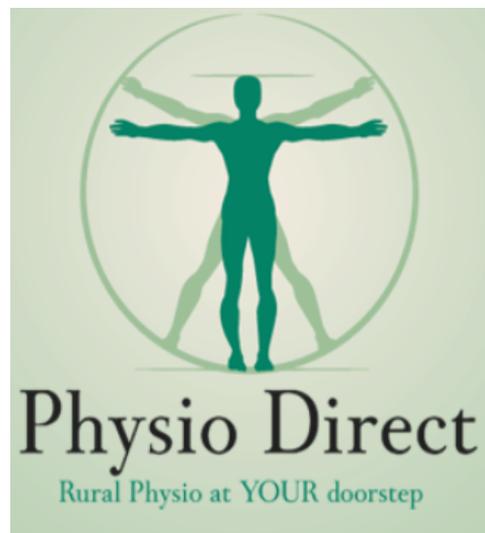




Wellington Harbour

Send your photos to [reception@physiodirectnz.com](mailto:reception@physiodirectnz.com)



AUGUST 2018

## The Surprising Truth About Osteoarthritis

PHYSIO DIRECT

Sufferers of knee pain know that nothing can kill your optimism for a recovery faster than a diagnosis of Osteoarthritis (OA). Osteoarthritis is often seen as a kind of death sentence for joints. Many people believe that if you have OA your pain will never improve and will only get worse until a joint replacement can be performed. In fact, joint replacements for hip and knee OA are some of the most common and indeed successful operations performed by orthopedic surgeons.

At least this has been conventional wisdom for decades. Many of us see our bodies like cars, when a part 'wears out' it needs replacing with a new one. The truth is much more complicated, mainly due to our bodies' incredible ability to adapt and change.

Physiotherapists have always known that the pain and disability that comes with arthritis can be improved with a closely targeted exercise program. In some cases, the pain that is attributed to OA is actually due to another, entirely treatable cause. In other cases, strengthening the musculature around the painful joint can have a significant effect by providing the joint with extra support.

The way we move is often affected negatively by pain and this in itself can create a downward spiral. This is not to say that in some cases, surgery is the best and most effective option to improve your quality of life. Rather that there is a strong case to see a physiotherapist to seek treatment for your knee pain first.

Physiotherapists are highly skilled at

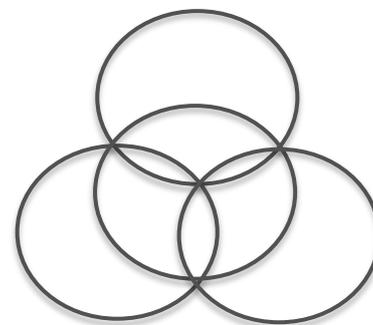
identifying exactly what is causing your pain and helping you reach the highest level of function. In fact, a recent study has shown that with targeted exercises, directed by physiotherapists – many patients who were scheduled to have surgery were able to improve their quality of life dramatically, avoiding surgery and getting back to their favorite activities.

While exercise is a very powerful treatment, it's not that any exercise will take away any pain. To be effective, you will need to have a full assessment and have a personalized treatment program created by your physiotherapist. This can involve identifying weak muscles, limitations in flexibility, finding painful trigger points, restoring movement to stiff joints and providing biomechanical assessment to make a combination of changes that can make a large difference to your pain and activity levels.

Your physiotherapist can also identify any external factors that may be contributing to your pain. Such as unsupportive footwear, workplace set up etc. Talk to us to see how we can help you manage your osteoarthritis.



## Brain Teaser



Trace this pattern of four crossing circles with a pencil in one continuous line without taking the pencil point off the paper.

You are not allowed to cross the line, or go over any part of it twice.

### One Leg Physio Challenge #3

*Can you stand on one leg and count backwards from 100, by 7's?*

*Thinking challenges your ability to concentrate.*

Go to [www.oneleg.physio](http://www.oneleg.physio) to find out more about how to improve your balance.

## PhysioTip

Rest, stretching and strengthening are essential parts of physiotherapy treatment, however, each should be done at different times at different stages of recovery for different conditions.

# Hamstring Tears

## What is it?

The hamstrings are a large group of muscles found at the back of the thigh. The primary role of these muscles is to bend the knee and collectively, these muscles are some of the strongest in the body. Despite their strength, the hamstrings are very prone to injury especially when overworked or undertrained. Hamstring strains and tears are quite common in sports that involving sprinting, jumping and sudden changes in speed. Football and soccer players are some of the athletes most commonly affected by hamstring tears.

## Hamstring strains are categorized into three grades, these are:

**Grade 1 (mild)** – A few muscle fibers are either damaged or ruptured; there may be pain a day after the injury but no loss of movement.

**Grade 2 (moderate)** – Roughly half of the muscle fibers are torn; there may be acute pain and mild loss of function; walking may be affected.

**Grade 3 (severe)** – More than half of the muscle fibers are ruptured and there is immense pain and swelling; definite muscle weakness and loss of function.

## What are the symptoms?

The symptoms of a hamstring tear depend on the severity of the injury. Common symptoms include pain at the back of the thigh – which could range from mild to severe, swelling, bruising, loss of knee motion, tenderness at the back of the thigh, reduced length and muscle weakness of the hamstring. In some cases, tingling, numbness and weakness of the structures below the knee are seen. However, these are rare.

## What are the causes?

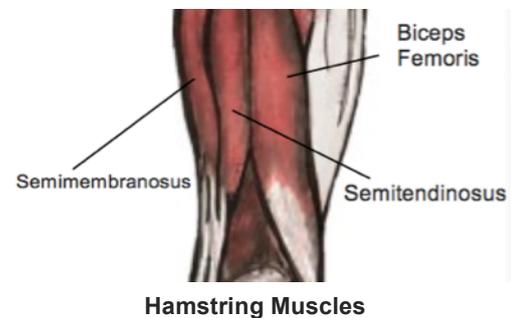
A single cause of hamstring tears can be difficult to determine however, it is thought that a lack of coordination between the hamstrings and quadriceps muscles during sudden changes of speed or when kicking can cause the hamstrings to contract excessively or become overstretched, causing a tear.

There are also recognised risk factors, that increase the possibility of hamstring tears including increased age, fatigue, strength imbalance, previous injury of the hamstrings, poor core stability, poor hamstrings flexibility and tight hip flexors.

## How can they be prevented?

Understandably, trying to prevent hamstring tears is important business. Research has consistently shown that the most important factor in preventing hamstring tears is having high eccentric strength in the hamstrings. Eccentric muscle contractions occur when a muscle is contracting while also lengthening. For example, when you lower your straightened leg slowly to the ground, your quadriceps muscle will be working *eccentrically*.

Your physiotherapist is able to show you some exercises that can target eccentric muscle strength specifically as well as identifying any risk factors that may be contributing to your individual risk. None of the information in this newsletter is a replacement for proper medical advice. Always see a medical professional for advice on your individual condition.



Hamstring Muscles

## Vietnamese Spring Rolls

### Ingredients:

- 8 Spring Roll Rice Papers
- 3 Tbsp. Fresh Coriander
- 3 Tbsp. Fresh Mint Leaves
- ½ Fresh Lime
- 2 Large Carrots
- 200g Rice Noodles
- 16 Small Fresh Prawns, peeled, deveined and pan-fried
- Sweet Chilli Sauce for dipping



1. Bring a saucepan of water to the boil. Add rice noodles and cook for 3-5 minutes until soft. Drain noodles, rinse and set aside to cool.
2. Cut carrots into thin sticks, chop mint and coriander leaves and mix these leaves with the carrot sticks together in a small bowl and squeeze lime juice over them.
3. Fill a large shallow bowl with warm water. Dip one rice paper into the water for one second to soften. Lay the wrapper on a clean bench and place two prawns, a small handful of noodles, some carrot, mint and coriander in a row across the center, leaving a few centimeters of the rice paper uncovered on each side.
4. Gently wrap the sides of the wrapper over each other to create rolls.

**Serves 4 people**

## Physio Direct

Rural physio at YOUR doorstep



Raetihi	Taumarunui
Murupara	Putaruru
Ohakune	Matamata
Rotorua	Ngongotaha
Oxford	Belfast
Te Aroha	Westport

**P: 0800 55 55 123**

For locations go to  
[www.physiodirectnz.com](http://www.physiodirectnz.com)