

Acute Soft Tissue Injury

- Acute mechanical soft tissue injuries (muscle/tendon strains) are suitable for interim GP management with referral to physiotherapy services for rehabilitation of the affected tissue and return to optimal function.
- Acute inflammatory pain without trauma is not suitable for physiotherapy management and should be managed through medical intervention with appropriate specialist disciplines in the assessment and treatment of inflammatory disorders or other serious pathology.

Information Required

- Injury or pattern of onset of pain/dysfunction (include mechanism of injury, date of injury, irritability and severity of pain/dysfunction).
- Past medical history of inflammatory disorders, gout, osteoporosis, OA, surgical history relevant to limb.
- Social history (inc IV drug use).
- Identification of “Yellow” flags (psychosocial issues that may affect compliance, presentation and response to interventions).

Investigations Required

- Diagnostic ultrasound may be indicated when large or disabling injury is suspected.

Fax Referrals to

Fax: (08) 8204 3040

Red Flags

Red flags should prompt immediate GP referral to Emergency Department

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| ☞ Red, hot, swollen joint without trauma | ☞ Skin breaks with signs of cellulitis/infection in surrounding tissue |
| ☞ Concurrent fever | ☞ Bilateral symptomology |
| ☞ Severe, unremitting, night pain | |

Suggested GP Management

- Exclude inflammatory pathology
- Exclude neurological and systemic pathologies
- Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation of injured tissue
- Pharmacological intervention (Simple pain relief, Non-steroidal anti-inflammatories, opioid pain relief)
- Referral to physiotherapy services

Clinical Resources

- NHMRC guidelines for the management of acute musculoskeletal pain
<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/cp94.pdf>

General Information to assist with referrals and the Referral templates are available to download from the SALHN Outpatient Services website www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/SALHNoutpatients.

Version	Date from	Date to	Amendment
2.0	November 2017	November 2019	Content updates