

Summer 2009

Cycling injuries

How to stay out of harm's way whilst you are on your bike

Cycling has grown in popularity in recent years. It is an enjoyable activity for all ages, and is a great way to get out and enjoy the world around you. However, bicycle injuries are common so you need to be aware of this.

TYPES OF INJURIES

The nightmare scenario with cycling is a collision or a fall. These can result in major trauma such as fractures, head injury, chest injury and even death. Lower down the scale are problems such as overuse injury, neck and back pain and saddle soreness.

BIKE SET-UP AND CORRECT POSTURE

Many neck, back, shoulder and leg problems can be the result of poor bike set up and poor posture. Having your bike set-up correctly to suit your body and maintain good posture is therefore vital. It is worth having this done professionally by visiting a reputable bike shop or mechanic.

OVERUSE

Riding to far, to fast, too often or too many hills can lead to overuse problems. Build up your riding slowly until your body accommodates to the challenges you put it through. It is worth having regular breaks in between rides and even looking into some cross training to give your body a break from doing the same repetitive movements.

PROPER EQUIPMENT

This is also vital. It goes without saying that you should have the best helmet you can afford. A good reliable bike is essential. Padded gloves, appropriate clothing, good riding shoes, pedals and cleats are all good investments to prevent injury. Have your bike serviced regularly so you know your brakes work properly, that your wheels aren't coming loose etc.

FLEXIBILITY

Make sure you have good flexibility in your spine, legs and arms. Poor body biomechanics can predispose you to various injury such as spinal pain or knee problems.

CORE STABILITY

Having good core control will enable you to maintain good posture over long rides and it will enable you to generate optimal power in your legs.



GOOD RIDING TECHNIOUE

This may involve changing hand position regularly, being careful with braking, stretching at traffic lights or during safe periods on your ride.

CRASHES

Ride defensively. Be aware of situations where cars may pull out suddenly, car doors opening or riding into stationary vehicles. Watch for oil slicks on the road, animals or children running onto road as well as other cyclists.

If you do suffer an injury, make a beeline to your physiotherapist for assistance.

Did you know?

Babies are born with 300 bones, but by adulthood they have only 206 in their bodies.

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Dear Patient,

Welcome to our newsletter and thanks for coming to see us for your physio needs.

Your ongoing health is very important to all of us here at the clinic. We hope that this newsletter will help keep you up to date with information about physio-related health matters that may be of interest to you and people you know. We hope you enjoy it!

If you have any queries, please call us. If you, or someone you know, have a physio related problem, please call us. We would be more than happy to help you out in any way we can.

Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to your family and friends.

With kind regards

The Physiotherapists and Staff at

PHYSICA SPINAL & PHYSIOTHERAPY CLINIC

PHYSIOTHERAPISTS

The physiotherapists working at this clinic are:-

Warwick James

Dip. P.E., Dip. Phys, Grad. Dip. Manip. Therapy

Gregory Collis-Brown

B. App Sc (Phty) M. Manipulative Phty.

Darren Ross

B. Phty, M. Manipulative Phty.

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B. Phty,
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Bach. Physiotherapy M. Manipulative Phty.

Chris Tubb

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Anthony D'Aloisio

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Carlos Bello

Bach. Physiotherapy

Nadia Hall

Ba Ex Sci, Grad Dip Ex Rehab Exercise Physiologist

Kate Walters

Massage and Myotherapy

What you should know about referred pain?

Referred pain is a term used to describe the phenomenon of pain perceived at a site adjacent to or at a distance from the site of an injury's origin. In other words, in some situations, you may have a problem in one place (for example, your neck) but feel pain in a different place (for example, in your shoulder and/or arm).

WHAT IS THE MECHANISM BEHIND REFERRED PAIN? The neurology behind referred pain is complex and still not understood



fully. However, one explanation is that of convergence in the spinal cord. The pain conduction nerves from different parts of the body converge in the same or an adjacent area in the spinal cord. When nerve impulses arrive from one area of the body (e.g. the neck), the brain is unable to differentiate these signals from those of the adjacent nerves (e.g. the shoulder and arm) entering the spinal cord and so you "feel" the pain in both areas (neck, shoulder and arm). This pain is felt in the shoulder and arm even though the problem is only in the neck.

EXAMPLES OF REFERRED PAIN

The are many other examples of referred pain. Often heart attacks can cause arm pain; your neck can cause headache and your back can cause pain into your leg, chest or abdomen.

WHAT IT MEANS TO YOU

Pain can be a "great liar" in that you can easily be confused about what is causing your pain. Having ongoing treatment on your shoulder, when you really have a neck problem, can be a waste of time and money. It is always best to have your problem thoroughly assessed so that the proper treatment can be initiated.



Splints, tape and other products

Your physiotherapist can obtain a range of splints, braces, walking ds, tape and other equipment for you, to help you manage or overcome a problem or disability. A physiotherapist can advise

and ensure it fits properly and suits your condition. If you are considering obtaining brace or some other type of medical device, ask your physiotherapist to recommend and supply it.

Visiting your physiotherapist

Things you should know to get the best results

Many people visit physiotherapists to try and over come various health problems. The physiotherapy profession is wide and varied. Though most people visit a physiotherapist to try and over come muscle and joint pain, physiotherapists can be involved with problems like incontinence, burns, neurological problems (such as strokes), various medical problems (like heart and lung disorders), to help you overcome surgery and the list goes on.

Physiotherapists use physical modalities (non-surgical

manipulation, splints or braces, acupuncture, education

and advice and electrical modalities such as ultrasound

restore normal function in an injured part of your body.

Often this will alleviate pain and enable you to do your

If you are serious about getting better you need to

commit to a full course of treatment. It may take

several weeks to regain movement, strengthen

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO GET BETTER

muscles and re-train your brain to control your body

properly. Ceasing treatment prematurely can lead to

ongoing or recurrent problems. You need to discuss at

the outset what treatment will entail and how long it

As a rule of thumb, the longer you have had problems

take to get better. A recent episode of mild back ache

that has been present for several months. If you have

and the more severe they are, the longer they will

will usually get better quicker than severe sciatica

had multiple types of treatment/therapists in the

therapy. Generally, your physiotherapist is trying to

and non-drug therapies). This may involve exercise,

hands-on therapies such as massage and joint

ACHIEVE?

normal activities again.

FULL COURSE OF TREATMENT



WHAT IS YOUR PHYSIOTHERAPIST TRYING TO

Very often you will be given home exercise and advice to help enhance your recovery. Carrying these out is an essential part of your therapy and enables you to participate in the treatment process and not over-rely on passive treatment.

SLOW IMPROVEMENT

YOUR EXERCISE PROGRAM

If you are worried that you are not improving at a rapid enough rate, you should discuss this with your physiotherapist. One thing to consider at this point is whether you have truly been compliant with therapy (having regular treatment, carrying out your exercise, avoiding activities that continually flare up your condition etc.). Sometimes treatment may need to be adjusted in some way. Sometime it may be necessary to initiate further investigation (such as an X-ray), to refer you to another type of health provider (e.g. Podiatrist) or to your family doctor.

In summary, your physiotherapist is a highly trained health professional who will work with you to get the best results possible. You need to commit to a full course of treatment, be active in the treatment process and discuss any concerns you have with your physiotherapist.

Did vou know?

Fingerprints serve a function - they provide traction for the fingers to grasp things.

What types of conditions can a physiotherapist help you with?

Many patients are unaware of the many conditions that can benefit from physiotherapy. Below is a list of some of the common problems that we help you deal with:-

- ❖ Back and neck pain ❖ Headaches
- ❖ Sprained ankles ❖ Injured knees
- ❖ Arthritic pain and stiffness ❖ Shoulder pain ❖ Tennis elbows ❖ Tendon problems
- ❖ Muscle tears ❖ Hand and foot problems
- Bruising Fractures
- Rehabilitation after joint replacements
- possible, have an assessment from one of the physiotherapists at this clinic.

Rehabilitation after joint and bone surgery If you have any of the above problems, and you want to improve as quickly as

Chronic joint and muscular problems What to do

Unfortunately, many people develop chronic joint or muscle pain. They may go from therapist to therapist and from doctor to doctor looking for a "magic cure". If you fit into this category, here are some things you should know:-

UNDERLYING WEAR AND TEAR

In many joint and muscle problems, underlying wear and tear may be present. The joint or muscle has simply worn out and not capable of withstanding the same stresses that it could at a younger age. Doing too much, too often may cause pain and inflammation. You may need to accept this.



MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGIES

Chronic pain can lead to depressed moods and this can make your pain worse. Whilst medication can help you in this respect, finding coping strategies can also be important. Distracting yourself from the pain by going on outings, having hobbies and socialising can be helpful. Sitting at home, dwelling on the pain can make the pain and your mood worse. Gentle exercise can stimulate pain relieving chemicals in your body and it can stimulate your immune

HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

Keeping your weight under control, having a healthy diet, having a good nights sleep, giving up smoking and reducing alcohol intake may all help your muscle and joint problems.

FIRST AID MEASURES

If you have a flare up, use the RICER regime outlined on this

Pacing means breaking big jobs or activities (such as cleaning the house or gardening) into several small "bite sized" chunks that don't exacerbate your pain. An hour of housework may irritate your back pain but four 15 minute chunks, with a rest in between, may not.

CHRONIC PAIN AND THE NERVOUS SYSTEM

Chronic pain alters the nervous system to the extent where non painful nerve signals (such as stretch) may be interpreted by the brain as being painful. Whilst you should respect pain, don't let it stop you living. Not all pain you feel is the result of tissue damage. You need to recognise that sometimes your body may be "tricking" you into thinking you are injuring yourself.

ACUTE FLARE UPS

Taking medication, using the RICER regime and having physio for acute flare-ups is appropriate. Taking strong pain medication daily or having hands-on therapy 3 times per week for the rest of your life may not be appropriate.

MEDICATION AND RE-ASSESSMENT

Speak to your GP about medication and have your problem

MAINTENANCE TREATMENT

re-assessed from time to time to make sure you are on the right track with your treatment.

A regular "tune-up" can help you stay feeling better

If you have a chronic or recurrent problem, such as back pain, neck pain, headaches or arthritis, a regular "tune-up" may help you enjoy life more.

Most of these problems mentioned respond very well to a course of physiotherapy. In conjunction, your physiotherapist will usually give you self treatment exercises, to help you improve your problem and maintain this improvement.

Unfortunately, spinal problems and arthritic pain can recur and can make your life miserable. If this is the case with you, or someone you know, then regular maintenance treatment (or "tune-up" sessions) should

"Tune-up" sessions will help keep your joints mobile, will release tight muscles and will update your self treatment exercises, so that they are giving you maximum benefit.

find that a tune-up session every few weeks can help keep them feeling good and stop them having



acute episodes of pain. It is also more cost effective than having extensive treatment to overcome an acute episode of pain.

If you are wondering whether you might benefit from regular maintenance treatment, please ring to book a time to discuss this with your physiotherapist.

Good first aid will get you back on track sooner

If you suffer an injury, a knowledge of appropriate first aid will minimise bleeding and further damage. This in turn will help you overcome your injury as quickly as possible.

The basics of first aid can be summed up by remembering RICER for the first 48 hours.

REST the injured part so that no further damage can occur. This ma mean stopping work or sport immediately. It may also mean applying



some sort of splint to prevent movement of the injured part.

ICE should be applied to the injured part for 15-20 minutes, every 30-60 minutes, to slow down bleeding and swelling. Make sure you avoid an ice burn by wrapping the ice in a damp cloth, so that it does not directly contact the skin.

COMPRESSION will also help reduce swelling and bleeding . This can be done by wrapping a bandage around the injured part or by compressing the injured site with your hand

ELEVATE the injured part so that bleeding and swelling flow away from the injured part.

REFER the injured person to a health professional for further assessment and management. This would usually mean to your family doctor or your physiotherapist.

Physiotherapists are experts in managing sports and soft tissue injuries such as bruises, sprained ligaments and strained muscles.

Carry on this protocol for the first 48 hours after an injury. Also, during this time, avoid HARM. This means avoid Heat, Alcohol, Return to activity and Massage until you are sure bleeding and swelling

Did you Know?

Insomniacs may move as many as seventy times in a night.

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Your PHYSIOTHERAPIST

Practice Newsletter

Summer 2009

25 Wantirna Road RINGWOOD VIC 3134

PH (03) 9870 8193 www.physica.com.au

HOURS

The practice hours are

MON-FRI: 7.00am - 8.00pm

SAT: 8.00am - 1pm (*Please ring for an appointment*)

CONDITIONS TREATED

You can have the following conditions treated at our clinic:-

Manipulative Therapy for the Treatment of:

Spinal Problems

Sports Injuries

Treatment of Neck Related Headaches

Postural Assessment

Treatment of Work Injuries

Treatment of TMJ (Jaw) Problems

SERVICES AVAILABLE

Some of the services available to you are:-

Orthotic Assessment & Prescription

Home Visits

Nursing Home/Hostel Visits

Post-operative Rehabilitation

Hydrotherapy

Assessment and Treatment of Balance Disorders

Exercise Prescription and Monitoring of Gym Programmes

Clinical Pilates

Massage and Myotherapy

FURTHER INFORMATION

Preferred Provider for HBA, MBF and Medibank Private - HICAPS available for most health funds - we bill the health fund for the rebate - you pay gap amount only

Most Cards Accepted

EFTPOS Facility Available

159 Nov 2008

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Dear Physio

HEADACHES

- Q. I suffer from recurrent headaches. Can physio help?
- A. Many headaches can be due to a problem in your neck. A physio assessment can help identify if this is the case with you. Often you will have pain and



stiffness in the upper joints of the neck and restricted neck movement. Make sure your GP rules out serious causes of headache first. A gradually worsening headache or a sudden severe headache needs medical assessment.

LOW BACK PAIN

- Q. Who should I see about my low back problem?
- **A.** The majority of low back problems are due to a mechanical problem in your back. Usually these respond very well to physiotherapy. Medication and spinal injections have not been shown to alter the long term outcome for back pain sufferers. Only a very small number of people will benefit from surgery.

MUSCLE STRAIN

- Q. How soon after injury should I see a physio about a strained muscle?
- A. First apply the RICER regime for 48 hours and then commence physiotherapy. Early intervention will lead to a better, quicker recovery.



TENDONITIS

- Q. What is the best treatment for a tendon problem?
- **A.** A graduated exercise program to strengthen the tendon and its associated muscle is thought to be the best approach at present. A physiotherapist can set up a strengthening program suited to your needs.

Are you due to have orthopaedic surgery

After most knee, shoulder, hip, back and other joint surgery you should be having physiotherapy to



enhance your recovery. Ask your surgeon when you should commence this (usually as soon as possible). You can also request that you have your physiotherapy carried out at this clinic.

POOR POSTURE

- Q. My teenage daughter has terrible posture and experiences headaches and mid back pain. Can physio help?
- A. Stretching and strengthening exercises can help improve posture. Sometimes a postural support brace can be used for short periods to re-educate your daughter to keep a corrected position. The brace can often alleviate pain if she has to sit or stand for long periods and finds this brings or



periods and finds this brings on her pain.

CORE STABILITY

- Q. Everyone tells me I need to improve my "core stability" to overcome my back problem. What is "core stability"?
- A. There are specific muscles in your trunk and neck that help maintain your spine in an optimal position whilst you perform your activities of daily living. If these muscles are not working correctly, the spine may move or be positioned inappropriately. A physiotherapist can assess your "core stability" and show you how to improve it

KNEE PAIN AND HIP WEAKNESS

with specific exercises.

- Q. Can weak muscles in the hip be causing my knee problems?
- A. If your hip muscles are not working optimally, your legs may not function properly. This can overload the knees



and other structures in your legs. Strengthening your hip muscles can reduce this abnormal loading and help your knee problem.

Referring others to our clinic

If you know someone with any of the problems outlined in this newsletter, please let him or her know about our clinic. We are very grateful for any referrals we receive and we will endeavour to provide patients referred to us with the highest quality of care.

Physiotherapy offers a safe,

Physiotherapy offers a safe, gentle and effective treatment approach for a variety of conditions.

in this newsletter

The information in this newsletter is for general patient interest. If you have a problem you should get it properly assessed by your physiotherapist or family doctor.

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