

Return to running after hamstring injury



**OVENS VALLEY
PHYSIO & PILATES**

Phase 1 (building volume)

At low speeds the hamstring is actually under very little load and so it is possible to resume jogging quite soon after injury without pain. A walk run session is ideal to start building to running volume and maintaining fitness without loading the hamstring too much in this early phase. Depending on your sport demands, previous levels of fitness and how long you have already had off running you can start anywhere along this progression. When deciding where to start you should be able to run the duration with no pain and minimal fatigue at the end of the total session.

Session 1: 1: 2 jog walk x10 (10 mins running, 30 min session)

Session 2: 2: 2 jog walk x7 (14 mins running, 28 min session)

Session 3: 2: 1 jog walk x10 (20 mins running, 30 min session)

Session 4: 4: 2 jog walk x5 (20 mins running, 30 min session)

Session 5: 5: 1 jog walk x5 (20 mins running, 30 min session)

Session 6: 7: 1 jog walk x 3 (21 min running, 24 min session)

Session 7: 8: 1 jog walk x3 (24 mins running, 27 min session)

Session 8: 9:1 jog walk x3 (27 mins running, 30 min session)

You don't have to progress each time you run, it can be good to repeat a progression as required before moving on. You don't have to progress all the way to session 8 before moving on to phase 2 but once you are in phase 2 you can continue to include volume sessions following the above progression.

Phase 2 (building speed)

As soon as you are ready to start building some speed the following sessions are great to start running faster but without a fatiguing amount of volume. During this phase you might complete 1-2 speed sessions a week and 1-2 volume sessions from phase 1. Start with session 1 and progress though as able but repeat sessions before progressing if required.

Session 1: warm up jog 5 mins

3x200m 70% run (warm up), 1 min recovery

3 x200m 80% (running fast, stretch the legs out but not sprinting), 2 mins
recovery
(can also do some short agility drills if playing change of direction sport, max 80%
speed)
Warm down 5-10 min walk/run

Session 2: warm up jog 5 mins
3x200m 70% run (warm up), 1 min recovery
6 x200m 80% (running fast, stretch the legs out but not sprinting), 2 mins
recovery
(can also do some short agility drills if playing change of direction sport, max 80%
speed)
Warm down 5-10 min walk/run

Phase 3 (Sprinting)

Once you are ready to start adding in sprinting it is important to start with a small
volume and gradually build from 80%-100% max speed. During this phase you
might complete 1-2 sprinting sessions a week and 1-2 volume sessions from phase
1. Start with session 1 and progress though as able but repeat sessions before
progressing if required.

Session 1: warm up jog 5 mins
3x200m 70% run (warm up), 1 min recovery
2 x200m 80% (running fast, stretch the legs out but not sprinting), 2 mins
recovery
2x60m 90% (sprinting but sustainable for 100m), 3 mins recovery
4 x100m 90% (sprinting but sustainable for 100m), 3 mins recovery
(can also do some short agility drills if playing change of direction sport, max 90%
speed)
Warm down 5-10 min walk/run

Session 2: warm up jog 5 mins
3x200m 70% run (warm up), 1 min recovery
2 x200m 80% (running fast, stretch the legs out but not sprinting), 2 mins
recovery
4x60m 100% (10 m accelerate, 40m max speed, 10m decelerate), 3 mins recovery
4 x100m 90% (sprinting but sustainable for 100m), 3 mins recovery
(can also do some short agility drills if playing change of direction sport, max 90%
speed)
Warm down 5-10 min walk/run

Session 3: warm up jog 5 mins
3x200m 70% run (warm up), 1 min recovery
2 x200m 80% (running fast, stretch the legs out but not sprinting), 2 mins
recovery

6x60m 100% (10 m accelerate, 40m max speed, 10m decelerate), 3 mins recovery
6 x100m 100% (sprinting but sustainable for 100m), 3 mins recovery
(can also do some short agility drills if playing change of direction sport, max 90% speed)
Warm down 5-10 min walk/run

Phase 4 (Maintenance)

Maintenance of high speed running in training is essential for preventing hamstring re-injury. Maintenance programs will look different depending on each sports demands but key things to include are max speed sessions and speed volume sessions. A max speed session is loading the hamstrings at a really high intensity, greater than most strength exercises can do, which keeps the hamstrings long and strong. Speed volume sessions will maintain the muscular endurance needed to reduce fatigue because that is when our injury risk is increased.

Max speed session example: warm up jog 5 mins
3x200m 70% run (warm up), 1 min recovery
2 x200m 80% (running fast, stretch the legs out but not sprinting), 2 mins recovery
6x60m 100% (10 m accelerate, 40m max speed, 10m decelerate), 3 mins recovery
6 x100m 100% (sprinting but sustainable for 100m), 3 mins recovery
(can also do some short agility drills if playing change of direction sport, max 90% speed)
Warm down 5-10 min walk/run

Speed volume session example: warm up jog 10 mins
3x200m 70% run (warm up), 1 min recovery
8x200m 80-90%
Warm down 20 mins walk/run

This could be included into normal team sport training sessions but be mindful of total volume of the session and timing of the session. Max speed needs to be done early in the session when you're fresh. Also if you plan on completing a normal 1-2 hour training session in addition then consider the number of reps you can safely complete. A speed volume session can be included in normal training sessions but after completing them the training should be light and focus on skills rather than intensity as the muscles will already be fatigued.