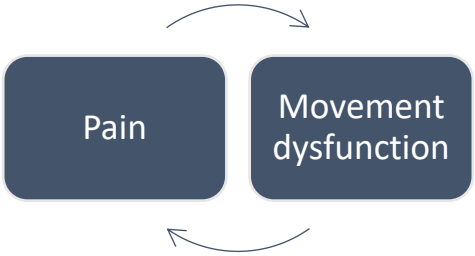
REHABILITATION STEPS

Recovery from injury can vary depending upon the severity, irritability, and nature of the condition. The body will go through phases of recovery and depending upon the extent of tissue damage or structures at fault will depend on how long these phases take.

Unfortunately, we cannot speed up this process. The aims of physio & rehab is to identify the structures at fault and provide the optimal environment for healing. Sometimes the reason for your injury is not clear. In this situation, we also need to identify reasons for the onset of your injury. This could be extrinsic factors such as inappropriate of worn out footwear, or poor technique; or could be intrinsic such as tight muscles or poor posture.

Pain and dysfunction are highly correlated. When you are in pain (for whatever reason) you move differently. This may be to protect your injury and is a good thing, however, this often continues after healing times have elapsed resulting in altered movements and muscle weakness and increased risk of injury later. We can also consider pain to be as a result of dysfunctional movement patterns. For example, increased time sitting at a desk or commuting can cause a stretch and weakness of the spinal muscles which can predispose to injury.



From this information, it is clear that getting rid of your pain is only part of the problem. The first step in your physio & rehab program is to identify the painful tissue, the structures at fault and the reason why you are getting your pain (intrinsic and/or extrinsic). An understanding of your daily life including sports, hobbies, work and social activities as well as your past medical history will give vital clues to the onset of your current pain and dysfunction. You are encouraged to identify activities, postures or times that your pain is aggravated as well as activities or movements that ease your symptoms. It is also helpful to grade these activities on a scale of 1 (mild pain) to 10 (severe pain). This can then be used to evaluate the effectiveness of your treatment.

There are many therapeutic modalities to facilitate recovery from injury. However, the bottom line is that you must be able to move well and in balance. This will reduce overloading structures and keep you pain free. Performing exercise as a mode of therapy is extremely important to restore optimal movement. Simply resting an injured body part will certainly off load it and reduce your symptoms, but this will also reduce its capacity to perform, thereby increasing the risk of further episodes.

Exercise rehabilitation has several benefits including:

- Restores joint stability and control
- Improves joint mobility and muscle balance
- Increases muscle strength and load tolerance

The goal of exercise rehabilitation is to return you to the activities you love doing. In order to safely and effectively do this, your exercise program needs to be graded. You will start with low level exercises in order to help reduce pain and address specific dysfunction and progress over a period of time to restore function. To assist in this process, I have devised a 3-step exercise plan to guide you from day 1.

Step 1: isolation exercises for specific muscle imbalance or weakness.

This is a highly cognitive stage and involves awareness of body posture whist performing specific movements. During this step we aim to activate weak muscles or reduce tension in tight muscles and encouraging movement through joint stability. This provides a platform from which to progress to step 2.

Step 2: Whole body integration exercises

Our bodies and brains know movement patterns; therefore, integrating your injury with whole body movements will facilitate dynamic mobility and stability with control.

Step 3: Increasing functional loading

This phase focuses upon your specific activities. Increasing your ability to tolerate loading, withstand fatigue move optimally without thought or fear. At this stage you will have the tools to maintain a healthy body and stay injury free.