

## Myositis Ossificans.

### What is Myositis Ossificans?

Myositis Ossificans occurs after a player sustains a severe muscle strain or contusion ('dead leg'). The initial injury is usually the result of impact (knee or boot to the lower leg or more specifically the thigh), which causes damage to the sheath that surrounds a bone (periosteum), as well as to the muscle (See Figure 1). Bone can grow within the muscle (this is called calcification), which can be very painful. Bone will start to form about 4 weeks after the injury and be mature bone within 3-6 months.



Figure 1: Myositis Ossificans.

### What causes myositis ossificans?

The main cause for myositis ossificans is a player sustaining a contusion or 'deep' muscle strain (See Figure 2). A player will sustain an injury and 'try to treat' the injury themselves – without advice from a sports injury professional. Usually a player developing myositis ossificans will not have applied RICE (rest, ice, compression & elevation) immediately after the injury and may have had intensive, aggressive massage too soon after the injury, usually from someone who is not qualified or even a friend! This can cause further damage to the injury and start the process of myositis ossificans.

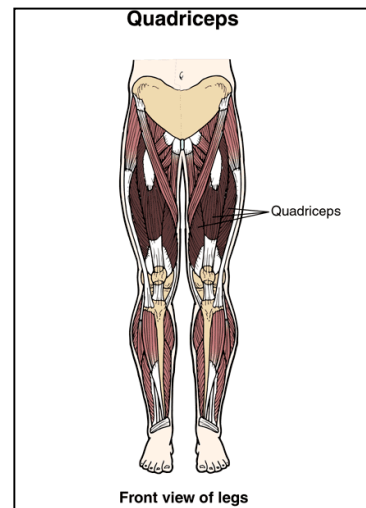


Figure 2: 'Deep Muscle Injury'.

### What are the signs and symptoms?

A player who has myositis ossificans has pain in the muscle when they use it – either when running or training or even just walking. They will notice a hard lump in the muscle and have restricted range of movement – their leg will feel 'tight'. An x-ray can show bone growth and development. If a player suspects they may have myositis ossificans they should see a sports injury professional as soon as possible.



Figure 3: Treatment of Myositis Ossificans (Acute).

### What can the sports injury professional do?



A sports injury professional (usually a sports doctor or physiotherapist) will x-ray the muscle to confirm an accurate diagnosis. They will then decide when it is safe to start rehabilitation. This will involve stretching and mobilisation from a physiotherapist (See Figure 3). Alternatively the sports injury professional could advise you to rest or immobilise the limb for 4 to 8 weeks. Occasionally if the problem is severe an operation is needed to remove the bone.