

The Healing Process

There are many factors involved in the healing process. The severity of the injury and adherence to a good treatment plan play major roles in how quickly you heal and whether you will suffer from residual problems. Complete healing time may range from two to six weeks. If there are major tears in the soft tissue or other conditions involved, such as diabetes or fibromyalgia, healing can take longer. In addition, stress, lack of sleep, smoking, and poor diet can cause the healing process to be much longer.



Phases of Healing

Phase 1: Inflammation stage lasting from 3 to 5 days.



Often we try to reduce painful inflammation; however it is critical to the healing process as it is the body's first response to injury. You may experience symptoms of pain, warmth, tenderness and swelling in the injured tissue with limited motion during this phase. Rehabilitation encourages resting the injured tissue while maintaining motion.

Phase 2: Repair and Regeneration, 48 hours to eight weeks.

Injured tissues are reabsorbed into the body and new tissue is formed. The new fibers are weak and very susceptible to damage from aggressive activity. Gentle range of motion exercises and joint/scar mobilization are the preferred treatments during this stage to help promote healthy remodeling and maturation of the new tissues.

Phase 3: Remodeling and Maturation occurs, three weeks to months or even years.



The new tissues that have been produced are becoming organized and re-educated. The application of tension (like exercise) is now important to guide the developing fibers into the correct orientation. This will allow the new fibers to perform their normal healthy function in the area. Rehabilitative exercises designed to help stretch and strengthen will help the new tissue to

be healthy and flexible with limited adhesions or scarring.

At times you may regress back into prior phases. Be patient and listen to your body. When you overwork yourself, test your movement or otherwise do something against your physician or therapist's advice you may be interrupting the healing process and prolonging recovery. Our goal during your physical therapy is to determine where you are in your healing, and how best to facilitate a fast and optimal recovery. This includes finding the most appropriate treatment to allow your body to progress in the healing process and to reduce risk of future re-injury.

Our progression in therapy will follow the phases and be as follows:

1. Pain control.
2. Swelling reduction.
3. Range of motion.
4. Strength progression.
5. Proper mechanics.
6. Coordination and balance.
7. Skill: specific activities related to sports, work, activities of daily living.