

significant swelling. In these acute stages you'll need to be more attentive to rest, elevation and ice and I wouldn't recommend cross training.

By days 4-7 you may find you're comfortable enough to start very gentle exercises for the calf. Simply move the foot up and down, first with the knee bent, then with it straight. Move only as far as comfortable – don't push through pain. Little and often is usually best – around 10-15 reps 3 times per day. The aim is to encourage the muscle to contract and relax, this should help clear swelling and maintain flexibility.

After day 7 you're usually in the sub-acute phase of injury. The muscle is still healing and new tissue will be vulnerable so you want to avoid excessive stress on it. It's important to maintain flexibility and strength in the calf muscle as things heal, but this shouldn't come at the expense of the healing process.

Day 7 to 21 post injury scar tissue is still developing, but still not strong enough to handle large loads. Avoid static stretches in this period, instead use 2 traditional calf stretches, but do them dynamically. Focus on gentle movement in pain free range instead of stretching the muscle and holding the stretch. A mini-squat is a simple way to maintain ankle mobility. At this time, you can also start doing supported calf raises on both feet's – push up on your toes and slowly lower. You can usually resume cross training from 2-3 weeks post injury but keep it pain free and avoid impact and resistance work.

3-4 week post injury the scar tissue can now handle a small load, you might benefit from starting static calf stretches if comfortable. In which case, stretch both the gastrocnemius and soleus muscles and hold the stretch for 30 seconds for 3-5 reps. At this point you can progress strength training and work. Try single leg calf raises on your weaker side. Do as many as comfortable and gradually increase until you can do the same on both legs. Stop if painful.

Preview from Notesale.co.uk
Page 2 of 2