THE HEALING PROCESS

Strain - Also called a pull, partial tear, complete tear, or rupture of the ***MUSCLE* or *TENDON*.**

Grade 1 Strain (mild)	Grade 2 Strain (moderate)	Grade 3 Strain (severe)
• Slightly overstretched with no tearing of the muscle or tendon • No loss of function • Painful • 2-10 days healing time	• Tearing of the muscle or tendon at its attachment to the bone • Some loss of function • Painful • 10 days-6 weeks healing time • Surgery is sometimes needed	• Rupture and separation of the muscle or tendon from the bone • Near to total loss of function • Less pain than a grade 1 or 2 strain • 6-12 weeks healing time • Surgery is required

Sprain - A severe overstretching of a ***LIGAMENT.*** Pain, swelling, or bruising are common symptoms.

Grade 1 Sprain (mild)	**Grade 2 Sprain** (moderate)	**Grade 3 Sprain** (severe)
• Some tearing of the ligament, 0-20% • No loss of function • 2-6 weeks healing time	• Partial tear of the ligament, 20-75% • Some loss of function • 6-10 weeks healing time • Surgery is sometimes needed	• Complete tear of the ligament or complete separation from the bone, 75-100% • Total loss of function • 10-16 weeks healing time • Surgery is required • Severe sprains can pull loose a fragment of bone causing a sprain/fracture

Healing Time Table

Tissue	Injury	Healing Time
Muscle	Grade 1 strain	2-10 days
	Grade 2 strain	10 days – 6 weeks
	Grade 3 strain	6-12 weeks
Ligament	Grade 1 sprain	2-6 weeks
	Grade 2 sprain	6-10 weeks
	Grade 3 sprain	10-16 weeks
Tendon	Sprains	See muscle strains
	Acute tendonitis	2-6 weeks
	Chronic tendonitis	6-12 weeks
	Tennis elbow (chronic)	3-6 months
Bursae	Acute/mild bursitis	1-2 weeks
	Chronic bursitis	6-8 months
Nerve	Inflammation/trauma	3 months – 1 year
Vertebral disc	Herniation	3-12 months

The Healing Process

Whether the body is ailing from muscle, ligament, bone, or any other pathology, *the key to healing is creating an environment in that area that is most conducive to receiving nutrient-rich blood flow and energy*. This is done by;

1. Avoiding aggravating factors, i.e. picking at the scab (running on an inflamed knee, doing anything that causes pain in the injured area, etc.).
2. Finding habits that relieve symptoms. For example, spinal extension positions are usually very helpful for those with lumbar disc herniations or bulges.
3. Good nutrition, such as; fresh fruits and vegetables that aren't cooked to death, less dairy and red meat (these can cause inflammation and stagnation in the blood), less fried and microwaved foods (destroys nutrients), more water, etc.
4. Stretching and or strengthening any areas that will improve blood flow and balance tension surrounding the area.
5. Spending a couple of minutes each day focusing on the problem area by sending it positive energy and asking yourself what you can learn from it.

While all five of the above factors are essential, there is one that is often overlooked. Number five is one that most people don't think about and yet it is one that they tend to do the opposite of.

Think about how an injury or pain will or should prevent a person from doing something they normally do on a regular basis, i.e. sports, physical activities, job, or even sleeping. This limitation is usually not enjoyable for the person so they tend to resent the injury or pain; not to mention any fear and anxiety associated with it due to the unknown healing time and the "when will I be normal again" thoughts.

Many people will go so far as to despise an injury because it keeps them from doing something they love. When the brain despises a part of the body, what type of energy do you think it sends to it? Yeah, it's not very healing to say the least.

Resentment and anxiety are obviously not ideal in creating a healing environment, so the next step is to try to learn something from the injury so that the brain will see it as beneficial. That's what pain is anyway. It is a signal from the body to the brain telling it that something is wrong, and it's likely that the physical pain is related to a lesson in life, such as slowing down or being open to different ways.

It is important to be aware of the ego and its desire to attain certain "superficial" goals that may get in the way of healing or becoming healthy in general. For example, it is common for injured people to try to achieve their fitness goals despite the signals from their body telling them to slow down and take some time off.

Once the injury or pain is seen as an "incite to better health", powerful life lessons can be learned in the way of; 1) learning to slow down in general, this often allows doors of opportunity to open that would not have opened otherwise, 2) learning to be more empathetic to others, 3) learning to focus on health instead of external goals, 4) realizing that without suffering one cannot appreciate what they have or learn to act in spite of fear and pain, etc.

This is all fine and dandy, but one more difficult change needs to be made, and that's finding a new activity or habit to replace the old non-supportive one(s) until the injury is healed.

It is very conducive to health to enjoy more than one activity so that these activities can be cycled routinely in order to break up the repetitive wear and tear on specific body parts from each activity. For instance, it's usually great for a tennis player with a bad knee to take up certain cardio machines or swimming. This is however impossible if that person is focused on tennis instead of their health. The reality is this;

Focus on health, and you will receive it. Focus on unhealthy things, and you will eventually receive signals (usually pain) from your body telling you that you need to focus on your HEALTH!