



Grading Scale for Severity of Pain due to Playing-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders (PRMDs)

Grade	Description
1	- Pain while playing or for a short period after playing.
2	- Pain that persists for a longer period (hours) after playing.
3	- Pain that progresses while playing and requires the practice session to be shortened but resolves between sessions.
4	- Pain that progresses while playing and does not totally resolve between sessions. - Pain also with other uses of the limb (writing, driving, lifting, cooking, opening doors etc...).
5	- Continuous pain that markedly reduces or prevents playing. - Pain at rest and at night.

This scale will help you to determine the severity of pain, and the progression of your condition. A clinical assessment is required. **Grades 1 to 3** may be treated with relative rest, physiotherapy and control of movement and instrumental technique, changes in practice habits (see the **“Prevention” and “Risk Factors” advice sheets**), analgesics / nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medication.

Grades 4 and 5 may require a radical rest programme at first, followed by a very gradual return to playing (see the **“Return to Play Schedule” advice sheet**), accompanied by the treatment strategies highlighted above.

References

- 1- Fry HJH (1986) Overuse syndrome in musicians: prevention and management. *The Lancet*. Vol.2:728-732.
- 2- Fry HJH (1988) The Treatment of Overuse Syndrome in Musicians. Result in 175 Patients. *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*. Vol.81:572-575.
- 3- Hoppmann RA (1998) Musculoskeletal Problems in Instrumental Musicians. In: Sataloff RT, Brandfonbrener AG, Lederman RJ ed. *Textbook of Performing Arts Medicine*. 2nd ed. New York: Raven Press, pp.71-110.
- 4- Lederman RJ (2002) Neuromuscular Problems in Musicians. *The Neurologist*. Vol.8:163-174.