

## WHAT IS IT AND WHAT CAUSES THIS?

A bruise is an area of skin discoloration. A bruise occurs when small blood vessels break and leak their contents into the soft tissue beneath the skin. A bruise is also referred to as a contusion or hematoma. Bruises are often caused by falls, sports injuries, car accidents, or blows received by other people or objects. If you take a blood thinner, like aspirin or warfarin, you are likely to bruise more easily.

The main symptoms are pain, swelling, and skin discoloration. The bruise begins as a pinkish red color that can be very tender to touch. It is often difficult to use the muscle that has been bruised. For example, a deep thigh bruise is painful when you walk or run. Eventually, the bruise changes to a bluish color, then greenish-yellow, and finally returns to the normal skin color as it heals.

## WHAT DAMAGE HAS BEEN DONE?

Bruises result from ruptured or damaged blood veins and capillaries in the epidermis, dermal and subcutaneous skin layers. Deep tissue or deep skin bruises damage capillaries in muscle tissue.

Red, blue and sometimes purple appearance of bruises is manifested by blood seeping or bleeding into surrounding tissue. As blood coagulates or dries, bruises become darker and commonly fade as tissue fluids flush surrounding bruised areas and as bleeding stops.



## HOW CAN PHYSIOONE ASSIST?

- We can provide appropriate acute management including education, compression and the application of ice
- We can provide advice for the successful return to sports
- We can prescribe strengthening, stretching and endurance exercises to assist in the return to sport.
- We can do soft tissue and manual therapy to release tight muscles and stiff joint structures resulting from deep bruising.
- Ultrasound is very helpful in alleviating the tissue damage.