

5 Steps to Pickleball Injury Recovery

A physical therapist guided plan for returning to the court stronger, more mobile, and ready to play the long game.



1 Evaluation Phase

Week 1

Manage your pain



What progress looks like:

- Pain rated < 3/10 at rest.
- Injury site and movement assessed.
- Walking without significant limp.
- Swelling visibly reduced.
- Home program initiated.
- Sleeping without pain disruption.

2 Improving Phase

Weeks 2-3

Restore Range of Motion



What progress looks like:

- Full or near-full joint ROM restored.
- Manual therapy improving mobility.
- Activities of daily living pain-free.
- Pain-free passive stretching.
- Light resistance tolerated well.
- No flare-up after gentle activity.

3 Strength Phase

Weeks 3-5

In-Home PT



What progress looks like:

- Single-leg stance 10 seconds.
- Lateral movements controlled.
- Paddle grip strength restored.
- Hip/shoulder/core strength improving.
- Squat and lunge mechanics sound.
- No compensatory movement patterns.

4 Conditioning

Weeks 5-7

Sport-Specific Mechanics



What progress looks like:

- Dinking & groundstroke mechanics pain-free.
- Overhead and serve motion assessed.
- Endurance adequate for a full game.
- Lateral shuffle & split-step tolerated.
- Agility drills without hesitation.
- Confidence in quick directional changes.

5 Return to Play

Weeks 7-10

Recovery is Ongoing



What progress looks like:

- Full practice session pain-free.
- Warm-up routine established.
- Re-injury risk factors addressed.
- Recreational play with no limitations.
- Strength maintenance program in place.
- Confident & back to competing.