

Do's & Dont's

- Avoid being seated for too long. If possible, get up every 15 or 20 minutes, stretch & walk around.
- Use a donut around the muscular tender point found with your physician, not the referred pain area (tailbone).
- Do not wear a wallet or carry things in your back pocket/s that may alter the way you sit.
- Avoid hiking up hills & stairs, if possible. If those activities are mandatory, then try to keep a good upright posture throughout.
- Use a pillow or other support (books or magazines) to balance a pelvis that is smaller on one side.
- If your physician has determined that you have a leg length difference on one side, then you should use a heel lift anytime you are up & about.

Sleeping

- If you sleep on your side, then sleeping with a pillow between your legs may be helpful.
- If you sleep on your back, then sleeping with a pillow beneath your knees may be helpful.
- Beds that are too soft & sag need a mattress board or need to be replaced.



Back Muscle Stretch

Lay down upon your bed, close to the edge, in the side-lying position with your head supported by a pillow. Allow your top leg to ease off of the bed & reach back with your top arm so you counterbalance you leg (figure A). Inhale deeply and lift your leg slightly towards the ceiling (figure B). Upon exhaling, allow gravity to pull your leg down again (figure C). Repeat this exercise 6-8 times & then just allow gravity to pull it down for 20 deep breaths. Repeat this same stretch on the other side. Do these stretches 3-5 times a day.

Front Muscle Stretch (figures to right)

Lay down upon your bed in the side-lying position with your back close to the edge & your head supported by a pillow. Allow your top leg to ease off of the bed behind you & reach forward with your top arm so you counterbalance you leg (figure D). Inhale deeply and lift your leg slightly towards the ceiling (figure E). Upon exhaling, allow gravity to pull your leg down again (figure F). Repeat this exercise 6-8 times & then just allow gravity to pull it down for 20 deep breaths. Repeat this same stretch on the other side. Do these stretches 3-5 times a day.

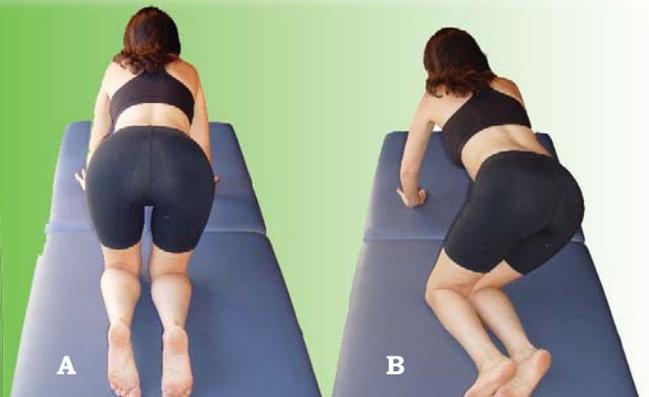
Laying Stretch

Deep Pressure/Acupressure

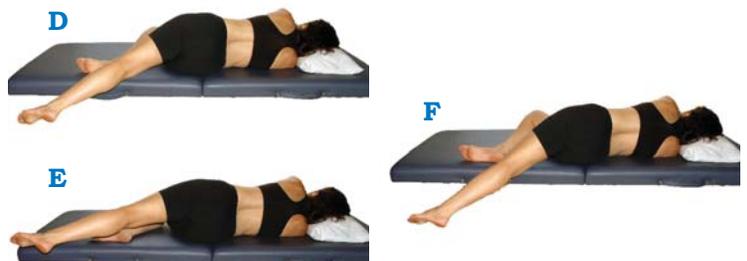


A small air-filled ball or tennis ball can be used to create the pressure. Varying amounts of air can be used depending on your sensitivity to a hard versus a softer ball. Roll around in the lying on your back position to find tender points to dwell upon or to roll out, like you are rolling doe. This can be done until the points disappear or until you think you've had enough!

Doggy-style Stretch



Get down with all fours on the floor & a pillow under your knees for comfort. Grasp a chair or table leg and allow your forearms to the floor. Lean back you're your buttocks to one side & hold it there for 6 deep breaths, see figure. You should feel a tension in the muscles of your buttocks. Do not stretch so aggressively that you turn tension into pain. After leaning to one side, then perform the same stretch on the other side. Repeat this exercise 2 more times on each side & then try to perform it 3 times a day.



The "Clam" Exercises



Lay upon your side with your head supported by a pillow, your knees are bent about 90 degrees & they are together, see figure A. Place your hand so that your fingers are below your bony hip & on the upper part of your buttocks. Lift your top knee & really focus your attention on contracting the muscle beneath your finger tips. You only need to separate your legs 3-6 inches for it to work, figure B. Then allow your legs to close again. Repeat this 5-12 times & then perform it on the opposite side. Perform this exercise 2-3 times a day. If the muscle starts to have some discomfort, then stop. It is your body telling you that you are irritating the muscle & it still needs to be stretched more.

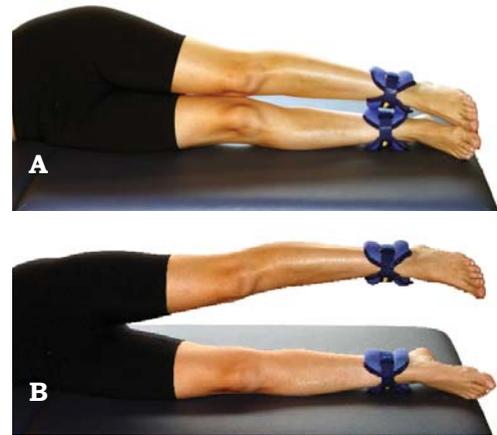
Do not do this until the clam is mastered.

- Start in the sidelying position with a pillow & feel your body elongated on the table (Figure A).
- Point your toe & twist your leg in towards your other foot. Then, lift the top leg straight up, so that your legs make a 15-30 degree angle (Figure B).
- Return to the start position by reversing the steps & repeat for 5-10 repetitions & then do the same on the other side.
- Perform this exercise 2-3 times a day.



Gluteus Medius Re-training

Using Ankle Weight



Master this exercise without weights first.

1. Start in the sidelying position with your ankle weights on (Figure A).
2. Point your toe & twist your leg in towards your other foot. Then, lift the top leg straight up, so that your legs make a 15-30 degree angle (Figure B).
3. Return to the start position by reversing the steps & repeat for 5-10 repetitions & then do the same on the other side.
4. Perform this exercise 2-3 times a day.

Using a reclined bicycle is a good exercise to recondition muscles suffering from disuse. The upright bicycle might actually aggravate this muscle. Start at a 5 minute ride once a day for 2 weeks (or at least 3 days a week). Then increase by 5 minutes each week. At the end of 10 weeks you should be riding 50 minutes & that is outstanding! However, any exercise program needs to be tailored to the individual & this should be discussed with your physician.

Reclined Exercise Bike



- Walking is one of the best exercises for this muscle.
- The muscle may still be turned off by a tight piriformis muscle or adductor group of muscles. Stretching them first may be essential to strengthening &/or re-training the gluteus medius

Last Word