

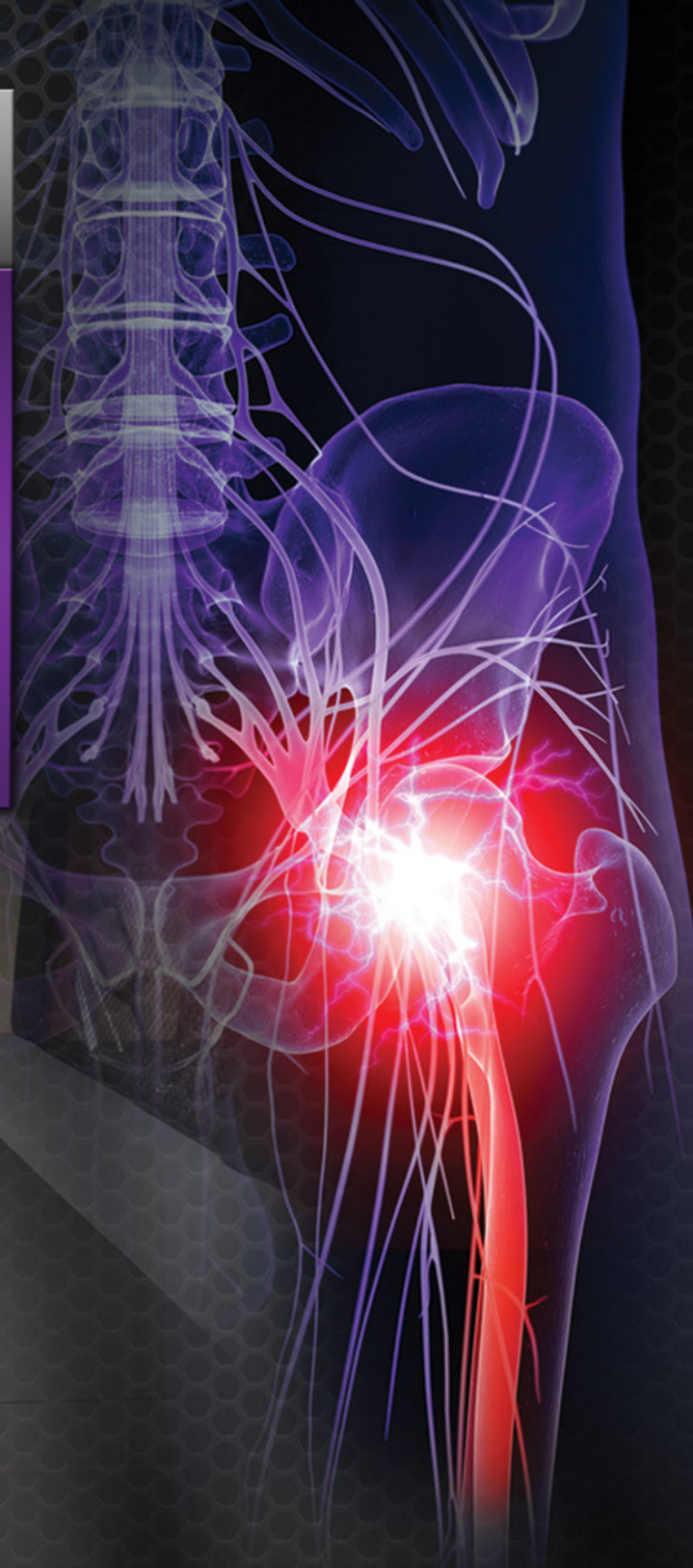
**UNLOCK YOUR**

# **HIP FLEXORS**



**THE KEY TO**

# **STRENGTH & VITALITY**



**By Injury Specialist Rick Kaselj & Mike Westerdal, CPT**

Published by  
**CRITICAL BENCH**.com  
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This publication is presented for information purposes, to increase the public knowledge of developments in the field of strength and conditioning. The program outlined herein should not be adopted without a consultation with your health professional.

Use of the information provided is at the sole choice and risk of the reader. You must get your physician's approval before beginning this or any other exercise program.



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## FOREWORD

Maybe you haven't spent too much time in the past thinking about your hip flexors.

Perhaps you know they get tight when you sit a lot or that they burn when you're doing an abdominal exercise the wrong way.

If you're anything like me, you were amazed to find out that this muscle, also known as the psoas (pronounced so-az), is one of the longest muscles in the body and the only muscle that connects the upper body and lower body. All while controlling balance, our ability to sit, stand, twist, reach, bend, walk and step.

That's just scratching the surface, because your hip flexors are also connected to your emotional well-being.

The reason this book came to be, is to help "unlock your hip flexors," so that you can be strong, active and energetic for yourself and loved ones.

Let me introduce you to my friend and leading Kinesiologist and Injury Specialist Rick Kaselj, MS.

Rick is "THE" guy fitness professionals go to when they want to learn about the latest techniques to help their own clients. He's given 352 live presentations to 8,152 health professionals in the US and Canada.

I first met Rick when he helped me fix a shoulder problem. He was one of the few injury specialists I met who helped athletes by focusing on getting them back to training, rather than avoiding workouts.



Rick showed me what so many other injury specialists hadn't - how to work through the right sequence of techniques to unlock the tension and tightness in my muscles to properly solve the problem.

He's the guy I turned to when my wife, Courtney, was struggling with pain and discomfort in her hips after the birth of our son Lincoln.

In the days and months following the birth, she experienced pain in her legs and discomfort when walking and sitting. She was even struggling to sleep.

In just 15 minutes working with Rick, he'd successfully unlocked her hip flexors so she no longer felt any pain or discomfort that day.

She was able to walk without experiencing the nagging pain in her pelvic area. She could sleep better and could start enjoying those precious days with our little one at home.

But Rick's "sequential flow" method doesn't only help those who are in pain.

At Critical Bench, our Head Strength Coach Chris Wilson felt his hip flexors were a little tight (from sitting and answering training questions on Facebook too much) and he tried the same routine Rick had used with my wife.

Within days, Chris successfully increased his deadlift by 35 pounds to finally hit that 500 pound pull he had been training to reach. All because he got to experience the sequential flow of movements that Rick developed to release his hip flexors.

I've seen, with my own eyes, the power of Rick's techniques on my wife, Head

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Strength Coach Chris Wilson and other countless clients.

Before diving into the exact exercise techniques in this publication, I hope you enjoy discovering the many health benefits of your body's "hidden survival muscle."



To your strength and vitality,

Mike Westerdal, CPT, RKC  
Founder – CriticalBench.com



# ANATOMY & BIOMECHANICS OF THE HIP FLEXORS

Each and every person is created unique. However, there is an exception to this uniqueness simply by the way our physical bodies were designed. Nearly the entire population looks the same and also functions the same. Disregard the traits like height, weight, and skin color and look what we are left with: the human body. The human body is more than complex. It's nearly incomprehensible especially when we get into the field of biomechanics and its effect on the entire body as a whole.

Sure we know that when the arm is flexed the biceps brachii is shortened, or contracted. This is basic anatomy and physiology but if you take it a step further and look at the body's natural response to the curling of the arm, things get slightly more complicated. Now we must look into the exact agonist, antagonist, synergist and fixator muscles. What about the energy systems used in this muscle contraction?

Okay, not to bog you down with all the science mumbo jumbo within very simple movements like the biceps curl, but what we are trying to do is open your eyes to the complexity of the human body. Trying to understand it and how it functions takes YEARS of research and experience and even at that point you won't know everything.





Certain regions of the body have a much greater impact on the overall human body than other regions. Look at the arms compared to the hips or the shoulders. The arms are fairly simple in design and function and will have little impact on the total state of the body.

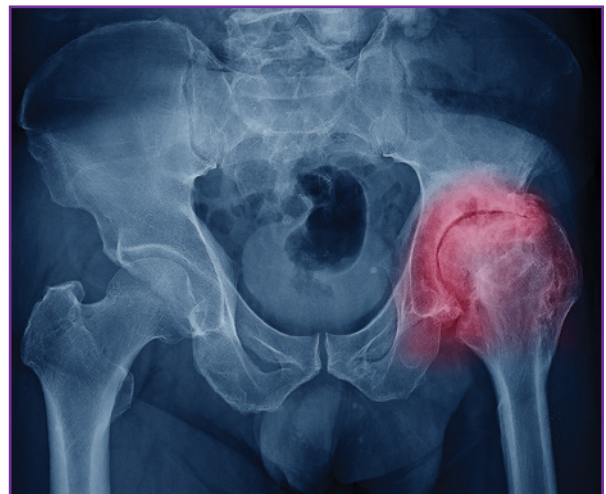
The shoulders are a little more complex in their function and design but let's focus on the center of the body and the hips. The hips are possibly if not undoubtedly the most important region of the body and this is what we need to discuss, in depth, in order for you to see the ultimate benefit of having healthy and mobile hip flexors.

We cannot function perfectly if our hips are imperfect. It's as simple as that. Our hips impact everything that the rest of the body does or tries to do. Sit, stand, twist, reach, bend, walk, step, and the list goes on and on. Imagine trying to sit or stand with a broken arm, or a torn rotator cuff. It still happens. Now imagine trying to sit or stand with a broken hip or a torn hip flexor. It's impossible. The hips contain all of life's movement and ultimately power.

Going deeper into the hips, it's crucial to know the basic anatomy. From here everything will paint a clearer picture for you. Some of this will be over your head but remember that the human body is not a simple creation; it's complex and so be sure to read this slowly and let it sink in. Trust me, you will not want to skip over this quick breakdown of the hips. Get ready to learn.

### **Bone Structure:**

In adults, three of the bones of the pelvis have fused into the hipbone or acetabulum,



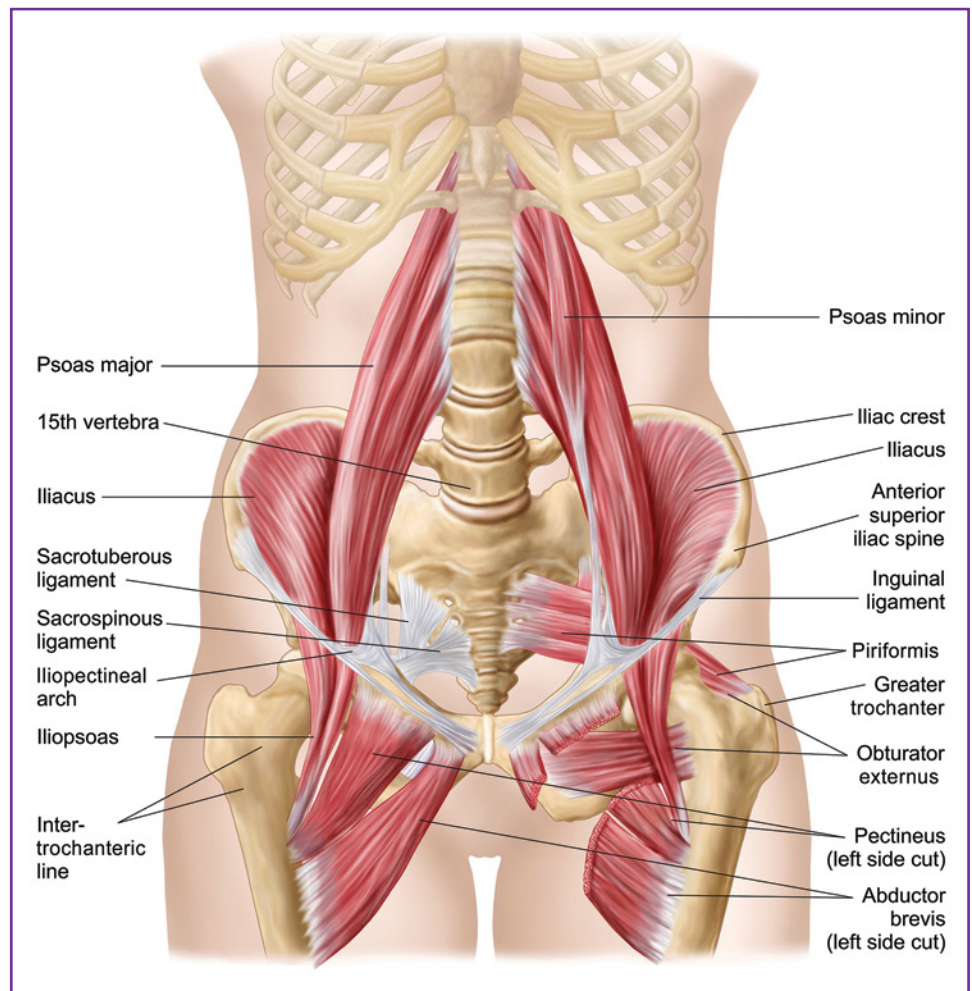
which forms part of the hip region. The hip joint, scientifically indicated as the acetabulofemoral joint, is the joint between the femur and acetabulum of the pelvis and its primary function is to support the weight of the body in both static (e.g. standing) and dynamic (e.g. walking or running) positions.

The hip joints are the most important part in retaining balance. The pelvic inclination angle, which is the single most important element of human body posture, is mostly adjusted at the hips.

### Muscle Function:

The hip region is home to over 15 defined muscles that play an important role in the function of the hips and surrounding bones. The hip region can be broken down into 4 muscle groups: the gluteal group, the lateral rotator group, the abductor/adductor group and the iliopsoas group.

The gluteal group is the major contributor for hip extension. The lateral rotator group is





in charge of the obvious, lateral (and medial) rotation of the hips. The abductor/adductor group controls the outward and inward movement of the femur. And last the iliopsoas group. This group does the opposite of the gluteal group; it is responsible for hip flexion.

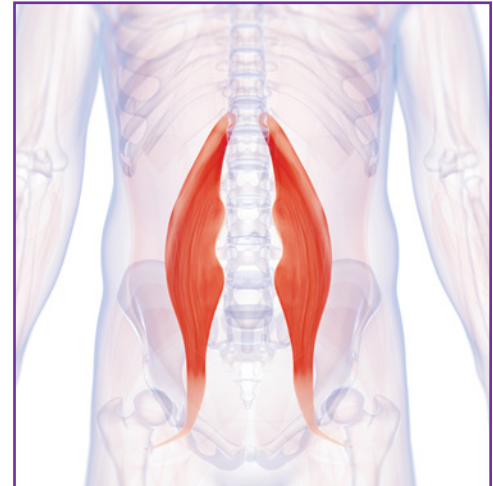
Each group within this area is responsible for certain functions of the hips. The muscles are not exclusive to certain movements. As mentioned above, every muscle group will act as the agonist, antagonist, synergist, or fixator (stabilizer). And in order for each muscle group to properly move as it was designed, certain things must happen in order for the hips to function properly.

Again, these 4 muscle groups have their own certain functions but one group in particular has a little more responsibility than the others and this cannot be disregarded. It's the iliopsoas group.



## MEET YOUR PSOAS

The psoas has been labeled by many as the “mighty psoas”. This particular muscle located deep in the hip seems to be one of the most popular muscles in the realm of fitness professionals; it’s been a subject of countless articles, numerous books and the star in what seems to be an endless supply of therapy, yoga, and rehab videos. It’s been claimed that the psoas is vital for physical, emotional and spiritual well-being.



As previously mentioned, the psoas is part of the iliopsoas group. This two-part muscle group is comprised of the iliacus and psoas, hence the term iliopsoas. To be clear, when referring to the psoas muscle, it is the psoas major that is being referenced. There is a psoas major and psoas minor but the function of the psoas minor is minimal at best and it is considered to be a weak mover.

In fact, the psoas minor muscle is thought to have been more important when humans walked on all fours. Some people don’t even have a psoas minor on one side or at all and eventually it is believed this muscle will become extinct. When discussing the “psoas” muscle, it is understood to be the psoas major or a combination of the major and minor as one group.

The muscles of the iliopsoas group work harmoniously together but the iliacus is not nearly as important as the psoas. Unlike the psoas, the iliacus is completely contained within the hip and is partially responsible for flexing the hip and bending the trunk. However the psoas is held as the primary mover in these two particular movements of the body.



The reason the psoas is so popular is because it has numerous significant duties. On the structural level, it is responsible for stabilizing the spine and flexing the hip. It also assists in rotating the femur outward and adducting it (moving it toward the midline).

One of the most significant things about the psoas is that it connects the legs to the spine, which means that what you do with your legs could possibly affect your spine without you thinking about it, or even feeling it.

The psoas muscles can be found deep within the anterior hip joint and lower spine; the psoas major (usually just called the psoas as previously indicated) work independently yet together as a team. The psoas attaches to the side and toward the front of the 12th thoracic vertebrae and each of the lumbar vertebrae.

Moving through the pelvis without attaching to bone, the psoas inserts along with the iliacus in a tendon at the top of the femur. The anatomy of psoas and its structure makes it a critical component for optimal postural alignment, movement, and overall well-being.

The psoas is the only muscle in the human organism that connects the upper body to the lower body, and its importance extends to the nerve complex and energy systems that run through the center of your body.

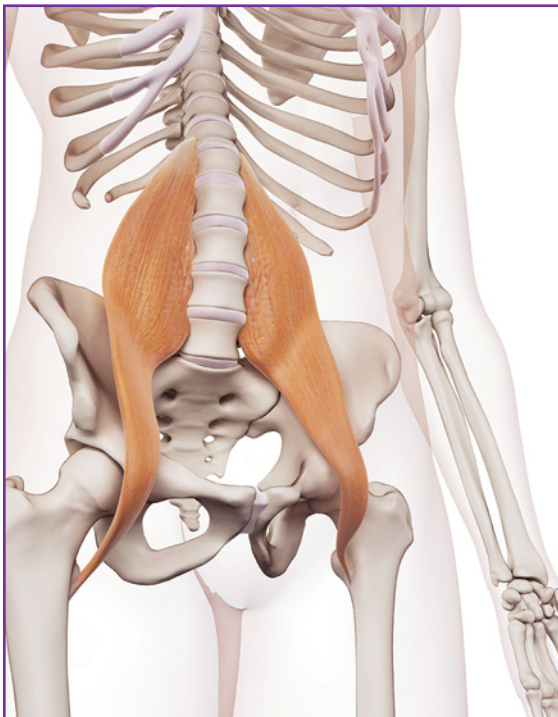
In addition, the psoas provides a diagonal support through the trunk, creating a shelf for the organs of the abdominal area. When walking, the psoas moves freely and joins with a released diaphragm in order to maintain a stable and secured spine as well as the organs, blood vessels, and nerves of the trunk. A healthy functioning psoas provides a delicate but important connection between the upper body and the legs.



In a perfect situation, the psoas guides the transfer of weight from the trunk into the legs and also acts as a pathway guiding the flow of subtle energies. When the psoas is working properly, it functions like the tie-downs of a tent, stabilizing your spine just as the tie-downs help stabilize the main pole(s) of the tent. At any point should one of those tie-downs snap, the entire tent becomes vulnerable collapsing from high wind or the fact that the stability of the foundation has been compromised.



Your psoas is also a major player in the protection of the spine by stabilizing your skeleton. Since the psoas can tighten and release independently at any of its joint attachments, it can counterbalance structural imbalances in several ways.



But if you constantly contract the psoas to correct for skeletal instability, the muscle will eventually shorten and lose its flexibility and integrity. Once the original structure of the psoas is changed, is when the body quickly enters a state of danger.

When the psoas has been chronically shortened, a list of unfortunate conditions can surface if not treated appropriately. Inevitably, other muscle groups become involved in compensating for the loss of structural reliability. The hips begin to tilt forward, altering the distances in certain joints



and bony structures, and the femurs are compacted heavily into the hip sockets. To compensate for this change, the quadriceps muscles or upper thigh muscles become overdeveloped which can be a recipe for knee and lower back pain.

As modern-day populations grow more sedentary thanks to technology and an over-emphasized use of “comfortable” chairs, psoas-related lower back, knee and hip pain, and the condition of “sitting too much,” are quickly skyrocketing. And the issue isn’t just caused by sitting.

Even the most active athletes can suffer from psoas imbalance and pain if they are not conscious about the activity they are engaging in. It does not take long for the body to begin to adapt to new positions especially if there is the tiniest bit of room for an imbalance to step in and take over.

## FIGHT OR FLIGHT MUSCLE

Survival has been encoded in our design since the beginning. Humans, animals, and even plants are required to survive. This isn't ground breaking information but you need to know that survival can become opinionated as well as uncontrolled. To some, survival might mean working a steady job for 40 years trying to avoid debt. For others survival might look like foraging in the woods looking for any source of fuel and finding shelter.



However, two things about survival are certain, you survive or you don't.

There's a system in the body that is known as the sympathetic nervous system (SNS for short). This is the epicenter of our survival. The SNS is one of the two main divisions of the autonomic nervous system, the other being the parasympathetic nervous system.

The SNS has two primary jobs, one being maintaining homeostasis within the body, or just keeping everything balanced and in check. This isn't an "as-needed" function of the body. It is constantly at work even without us knowing it and thankfully it acts that way. The second function is something called the 'fight-or-flight' response. The SNS is responsible for stimulating this mechanism in order to achieve that homeostasis within the body.

But what does this have to do with the psoas?

I want you to think back to a time in your life when you were in danger. What was your body's subconscious response? Did you jump? Did you fall down and curl up into the fetal position? Did you respond with an attack? All of these come automatically from the SNS. Regardless of how your body responded, it was controlled by the SNS.

Your body did what it was naturally designed to do, and that was to survive. Now if you adapt to certain methods of survival, for instance martial arts, or intentionally condition yourself in extreme environments, your response will 'naturally' differ. However, it is still the SNS that controls your response to any stressful situation that might occur. That's something you can't control since it is involuntary.

This survival response is thought to be located in the brain stem connecting to the spinal cord. The stem controls the autonomic functioning of breath, heart rate and the fight/flight reaction. The brain also manages social behaviors affecting survival, such as hoarding, dominance, and mating.

So what is the relationship between the psoas and the SNS?

When faced with that sudden 'danger' the survival response is activated and the mighty iliopsoas muscle responds by bringing together the two ends of the spinal cord; the pelvis and head aka 'the fetal position'. It is the iliopsoas muscle that rolls the body into a ball, protecting the portals of perception, (located in the face) and vital organs (located in the torso) from danger. Bringing the two ends of the spine together forms a durable spine, protecting our body from trauma. Thus, we are able to survive.





The automatic burst of the iliopsoas can also cause the leg to kick high and jump quickly allowing us to flee from harm. Or when fighting, it turns to steel in time of combat. Playing dead, a frozen iliopsoas expresses a heightened survival response of protection or trauma. Thus, we are able to survive thanks to the SNS and the psoas.

**The psoas and the SNS have a relationship that should never be in jeopardy. Once there is a disconnect between these two, the body's natural response to survival will become delayed or potentially blocked. If the psoas is unable to function exactly as it was designed to function, we will be put in a situation where the outcome could negatively impact our survival.**

By recognizing the iliopsoas as a key factor in our survival response, our understanding of a dysfunctional iliopsoas should change. When the function of the iliopsoas becomes unavailable or problematic, it is only able to react in such a way to the stress generated from a lack of coherency and that's why the psoas needs to be in optimal condition at all times.

This goes back to the two things about survival that are certain, you survive or you don't.

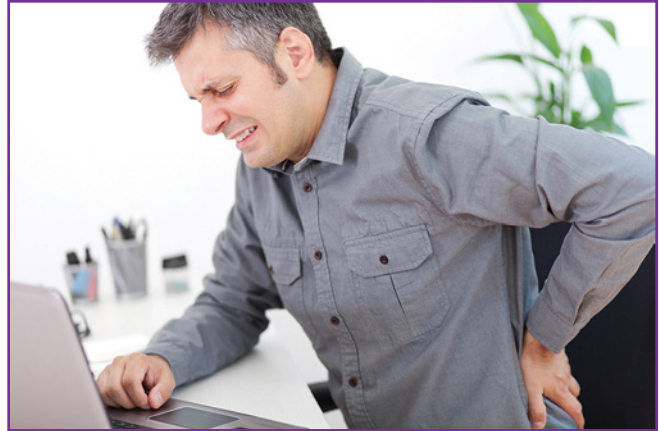
The psoas just doesn't become restricted or unavailable all by itself. We cause it to become this way. Through our day-to-day operations of life, we allow the psoas to adapt to a new 'natural' design, which can be controlled easily if we are aware of our actions. If you want to know what the biggest culprit of a dysfunctional psoas is, then keep reading. You'll be amazed how dangerous this daily activity that you are doing regularly is for the body.



## HOW SITTING IS KILLING YOU

As you just read in the previous chapter, the iliopsoas is more than important for survival and that you need to pay close attention to how you treat this particular muscle group of the body. One of the biggest (and most controllable) culprits of tightness and imbalance of this region is excess sitting. It's even made the news with headlines saying that sitting

is more dangerous than smoking and that those who sit are more likely to die at an earlier age than those who don't sit as much.



If you have a desk job or if your job requires you to drive a good portion of the day, LISTEN UP. The information we are about to share should catch your attention and hopefully you won't just skim over this chapter and move on to the next. This section applies to everyone since we all sit. So get your pen and paper ready to take some helpful notes.

We've all experienced it, that pain or achiness after sitting in a fixed position for a good portion of the day. Sitting in a stiff chair on a long distance flight. Typing up a lengthy business contract, writing a term paper or hauling freight across the country. However when sitting there is one thing that is certain, there's a strong chance you are placing your body in an unfavorable position and as a result of this, your body will get stiff.

This tightness is generated from the backward tilt of the hips. Then when you get up from sitting all day and go to the gym to 'ease the pressure', working the



core and legs, you only exacerbate the same pattern of sitting with many of the exercises. We are not saying to skip out on the core work, but your standard crunches and sit-ups aren't going to help your hips. And it is important to keep your legs and glutes strong, but too much flexion of the hip when exercising will limit the range of motion in your hips and will cause your lower back and your knees to take all of the pressure.

If you sit in a chair for long periods of time, on a consistent basis, your muscles will shorten in length. You can never really stand up all the way after they are shortened and this is when the ground starts to crumble underneath your feet. If you allow tension to accumulate within the hip and spine, your muscles may become too tight even when lying down and you won't be able to sleep on your stomach. Does this sound familiar?

The same thing happens with your hamstrings and your back; only it's your knees and back that are affected, resulting in a deep pain felt in your groin and hip region. And then you will complain of a deep ache in your stomach, and then lower back pain persists. This is a vicious cycle that is becoming a widespread problem in the sitting population.

Now this is where nearly everyone who falls into this category is faced with the same problem: You cannot just stop going to work or school and putting yourself in a seated position.

However, you may change your sitting position and incorporate a routine of exercises that can be found further into this topic. Even businesses are becoming more aware of this issue. Standing desks are becoming more popular in the workforce and walking breaks are encouraged. But in reality, just standing all day long won't fix your problem, the damage has been done over a period of years. Action needs to happen in order to correct the imbalances that have been made.





**By spending so much time in your chair in a flexed position coupled with a lack of movement throughout the day, you have successfully followed the formula for creating tight iliopsoas muscles.**

Sitting might be comfortable for most of us but know that you have unfortunately damaged your health and are in major need of repair.



Not only that, keep in mind that the shortened muscles that have been formed this way, and are continually shortened by our habits, are the first to tighten under stress and the last to let go when the stress is over. This is why people mysteriously tighten up into pain after dealing with an injury.

We become how we live. We get more and more familiar with being 'comfortable', more inactive the more comfortable we become, and ultimately more set in the muscular tension that we can no longer control. The body responds and adapts and reacts to everything that's happened to us in our lives. Again, the state and health of our body is a result of how we live.

Trauma, injury, stress, our posture all builds up as our "set" -- as in "set in our ways" -- a pattern of muscular tension as well as a psychological state. Yes, certain events in our lives are unavoidable like a car accident or a birth abnormality but given that we have the control over our physical body is something that should never be neglected, especially if it affects our overall health including our sex life.

## SITTING & YOUR SEX LIFE

I bet you never thought that sitting all day would affect your sex life. It's obvious the more active you are, the healthier you look and feel. But what does this have to do with sitting? And what does the psoas have to do with sex? If you are reading this section right now, there's a good chance that you care about your sex life, as you should. Sex is a wonderful thing and who wouldn't want to enjoy it to its max. But the truth is for men AND women, sitting all day will affect your performance in bed.



Think about these two scenarios: you have been on your feet all day, moving around, being productive, getting things accomplished, maybe getting a little sweat going on from physical activity. You are exhausted at the end of the day. A GOOD exhausted though, a sense of completion and hard work.

Now picture yourself sitting behind a desk or in a car for 6+ hours with little movement. You are still exhausted at the end of the day but the difference is that you feel horrible. The body LOVES to move and guess what, sex is movement. But not all movement is beneficial and this is what we need to look at in further detail.

As you just read, excessive sitting causes tightness in the psoas, which will lead to stiffness throughout the body (not in a sexual way either). And since the psoas can be responsible for good health as well as bad health, it's safe to say that

taking care of this region of the body will prove to be beneficial.

We want you to fully grasp what your psoas does and its direct affect on your sex life so pay attention.

Any type of pain in your middle and lower back as well as your hips or abdominals can cause shallow breathing and difficulty in certain movements of the hips. This has everything to do with how certain body functions are unable to happen smoothly from the restriction and limitation of muscles and organs. Not only does pain restrict our sexual performance but also the body responds to pain as a threat and quickly moves from a state of pleasure to a state of panic. **Sex and panic do not go together.**

Continuing on...

With a tight psoas from sitting all day your hips will become fixed in a forward thrust position causing your pelvis and leg(s) to rotate. This forward tilt will cause your hip socket to become compressed leading to pulling and shifting of joints, tendons, and muscles pulling on your lower back. This pulling on the lower back WILL decrease blood flow and circulation as well as delayed nerve response to the hips.



If you can't see how tight hips can affect your sex life, read the previous paragraph again and keep reading until you see the connection.

Decreased blood flow and circulation will happen with tight hips.





If you thought that was bad enough, let's look at the emotional side of this issue, as this might be more important than our physical performance in the bedroom. Our emotions have a lot to say about the current state of our sex life. Ask anyone if emotions and feelings have a role in their sexual desire.

You read the previous section on the Fight or Flight response, the psoas and the SNS. Together, all of this has enormous influence on our mental and emotional state and this directly affects your sex life. The fight or flight response applies to your sexual appetite or lack thereof. Again, by having a tight psoas muscle, signals are sent from the brain to the body that danger is imminent. These signals trigger responses within the body that will cause an overexertion of the adrenal glands and will weaken the body's natural immune response to stress.

If your psoas is constantly tight and overworked, the body is faced with permanent roadblocks of emotional and physical stress which forces the brain to continue to send warning signals to all of the systems of the body, including the reproductive system.

A tight hip isn't just a physical limitation but it's also an emotional one. The hips are the primary movers in sex and it's somewhat common sense that we want our hips to be loose and flexible in order to achieve great dynamic sex.

So what does this mean for your sex life? If you sit all day and aren't doing the appropriate work needed to fix your hips, you can be sure you are not tapping into your peak sexual health and that's why you are reading this and in search of a solution.

## INCREASE POWER TO INCREASE PERFORMANCE

Attaining your peak health in the bedroom may be extremely important for most (hopefully), but it's also important on the field of play. When it comes to athletes and achieving peak performance health, there is one thing they all have in common and that is being powerful.

Regardless of the sport, athletes want to perform at their best every single time they take the field, the court or the ice. In order to do that, they must have healthy, strong and mobile hips: Hips that function without pain, tightness or lack of mobility. Without getting too technical, this means there must be a balance in strength from front to back, side to side and top to bottom. It's the hip flexors, the iliopsoas group and gluteus group that help keep the body moving and performing at its absolute best.

**The power zone lies at the center of the human body.** Sure, the arms and legs are super important for any person or elite athlete, but the source of true power resides within the hips. Talk to any coach or trainer all over the world and they will agree with this simple assessment: All athletes from hockey to football and baseball to tennis rely on the explosiveness that their hips and glutes possess. Without the ability to jump,





twist, dive, run or move effectively, an athlete is dead in their tracks, literally.

What is the common thread that ties most athletes together? Of course some might say speed, or even strength, but the answer is actually the athletic position or ready position found in most sports. Imagine for a moment the linebacker in football, the shortstop in baseball, the goalie in hockey or the tennis player, they all stand ready in a position of strength to either tackle someone, catch a ground ball, stop a puck or return a serve.



None of them would ever stand casually in an upright position seconds before having to perform. Why is that? Because they would not be able to generate any power from that position. An athlete in almost any sport will stand with feet shoulder width (or wider) apart, knees flexed, butt back and torso tilted forward. They are balanced, grounded, strong and ready for anything that comes towards them.

From this position, anyone can react quickly, explosively and with tremendous power. If at any time the muscles in the hip area are compromised, athletic performance is undoubtedly affected and not in a good way.

Athletes from all backgrounds across the world spend a great deal of time working on the balance of strength within their hip area. They stretch, strengthen, massage, or anything else that will help them improve hip function.



Athletes understand better than anyone how crucial this central area of the body is to their performance. Without even realizing it, these athletes are helping to not only improve their physical performance but also their mental and emotional function.

Is it any wonder why after doing something physically active, even just a good long walk, you feel emotionally uplifted? As stated previously, the body was designed to move and not be in a seated position all the time. Athletes and others that push their bodies in sports or in the gym simply feel better and more energetic.

This is because the center of the body is not restricted in people like this. The messaging that goes from the lower body to the upper body and back again has less roadblocks, less stress and the signals are stronger.

When stronger signals are passing from head to toe in an athlete, their power production is improved dramatically. And as stated at the very beginning of this section, when you increase power, you increase performance.

## WHY YOU CAN'T FIRE YOUR MOST POWERFUL MUSCLE

Now that you're focusing on improving the health of your hips, fixing the issue isn't just as simple as standing up or doing a few exercises. That will definitely help but you need to do much more than that. Without getting too technical, the following information is designed to explain in more detail where power comes from in the human body and why performance suffers with problematic hips, so please continue reading.

As you now know, the psoas is a major muscle located deep in the pelvic area and is largely responsible for many of our daily movements. The hip flexors (primarily the psoas) are the most important muscles for hip flexion (moving your leg forward).

The most important muscle for extending your hip (moving your leg back) is the gluteus maximus or glutes. Both of these muscles obviously attach high on the hip and control the femur bone (upper thigh). When they are in balance with the proper mobility you inherently have good glute activation patterns.



Occasionally, people will have weak hip flexors, thus, when they flex their hip, the muscles that attach lower down on the hip and thigh (such as the tensor fascia latae and rectus femoris), end up doing what the hip flexors should be doing.

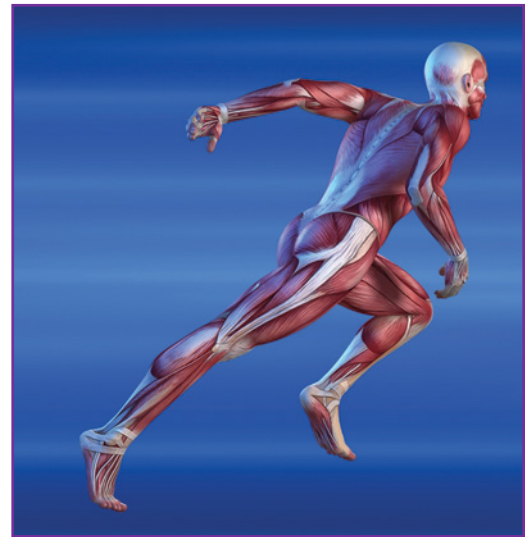
This also often leads to a posterior pelvic posture (old-guy butt syndrome) that

negates good glute and hip flexor activation in favor of hamstring and TFL activation and allows the head of the femur to slide slightly out of the socket, often causing hip pain.

Yes, that's quite a bit of anatomy and physiology talk but that's what takes place in nearly everyone who sits for long periods of time. Furthermore, excessively tight hip flexors with an anterior rotated pelvis (or a posture where the butt sticks out) can also restrict glute function, but in our experience the majority of athletes with tight hip flexors rarely have glute activation issues near to the extent as someone with weak hip flexors and a swayback posture.

People with tight hip flexors may have issues with hamstring strains and back pain, due to the excessive curve in the lower back, but from a glute activation standpoint, it's definitely better to have tight hip flexors than weak hip flexors and it's rather simple to correct the tightness issue which you will soon find out.

To have your glute activation patterns maximized, you need the muscles that attach your thigh higher up on the hip controlling movement of your thighs rather than muscles that attach lower on your hip. You want the muscles that attach your thighbone to your hip keeping the head of your femur bone "tight" in the hip socket. When you don't have this snug fit (don't be confused by compressed), you have glute activation issues.



**Too many people have non-existent glutes from sitting too much and also from not training their glutes hard enough in the gym.** From a strength perspective, if you were to consciously go in the weight room and do nothing but attack your





glutes like a bodybuilder attacks his biceps, you wouldn't be that far off the mark in activating those weak glute muscles and helping to improve hip strength.

There are 2 main problems that occur with regard to firing the glute muscles:

**Inhibited glutes:** In this situation the glutes are shutdown indefinitely. For a variety of reasons, they don't contract in your daily life when you walk, stand, get up off the toilet, or when you move in sport. This situation is more common in those who sit on their butts all day but it can exist even in elite level athletes.

**Overshadowed glutes:** Here the glutes DO fire properly, but are not as strong as other lower body muscles (like the quadriceps and adductors). When this weakness is present in the body, the body will compensate by using other muscles to do what the glutes SHOULD be doing. This creates inefficiency in performance and usually results in some type of pain or injury.

Whenever you perform an explosive compound movement such as a squat jump, deadlift, sprint, etc., the majority of work tends to be done by the strongest of those muscle groups. Technique will also have a substantial impact on all of this, but one problem many athletes have is they naturally have proportionately more strength and natural muscle cells in muscles other than their glutes, like their thighs.

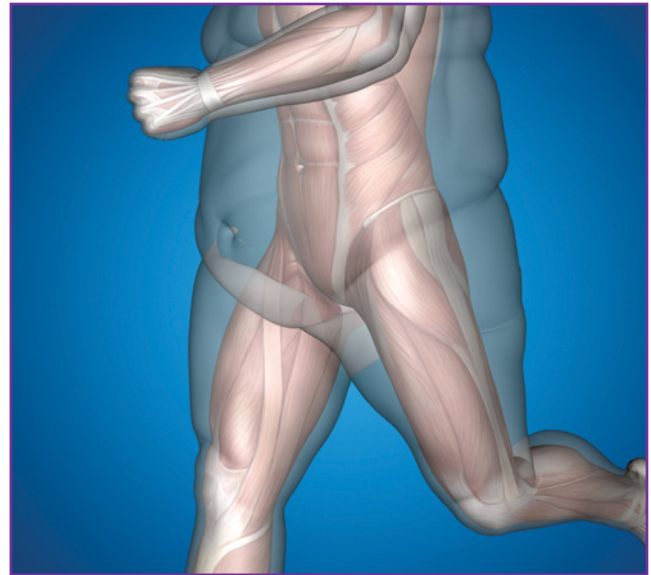
Retracing our steps a little bit we need to focus on how poor glute activation affects our psoas. In reality it's the psoas that affects our glute activation. It's another one of those vicious cycles that will screw us up if not fixed. In short, when our iliopsoas group is tight the glutes are unable to properly fire due to changes in muscle length, joint angles and efficiency of natural movement.

Restoring balance is the key here. Loosening the constantly shortened hip flexors while strengthening the glutes will lead to reduced lower back pain, increased hip mobility and improved performance on the job, on the field and at home.

## TIGHT HIPS = FAT STORAGE?

Just when you thought we covered everything that the psoas could potentially affect, think again.

We know that the psoas is intimately involved in the fight or flight response of the body. This response can curl you into a protective ball or prepare you to jump or run to avoid harm. And since the psoas is so intimately involved in such basic physical and emotional reactions, **a chronically tightened psoas continually signals your body that you're in danger.**



When the body is in danger the SNS activates the body's natural survival response, which will ultimately exhaust the adrenal glands, depleting the immune system as long as the body is considered in danger. Unfortunately tight hips will give the brain biofeedback similar to that of danger. When that feedback is given back from the hips to the mind the body will subconsciously stay in that 'survival' state.

Again, the body is designed to survive and the body's natural response is to protect itself so what happens to our body when faced with danger? It wants to curl up into that ball to protect its vital organs.

Think about this for a minute. If the physical body is constantly placed in a curled position, similar to how we sit in a chair, the mind will respond to the body

position as it would danger. Do you see the parallel? In other words, when we sit all day our hips shorten pulling us into the fetal position and it's this fetal position that the brain associates with survival.

Now, let's look at how detrimental this is when we are in this survival position. The adrenal glands become overworked and at some point they will become exhausted.

Our adrenal glands govern our stress response, by secreting hormones relative to our stress levels. They actually help control many hormonal cycles and functions in our body. When the adrenal glands are overworked, the body prepares for disaster by storing fat and calories.

Adrenal imbalance can cause a number of issues, including an expanded waistline. The science behind it is quite fascinating. Normally when we begin to feel hungry, our blood sugar drops and the brain sends a message to the adrenal glands to release cortisol. Cortisol activates glucose, fats, and amino acids to keep our body fueled with energy until we eat.

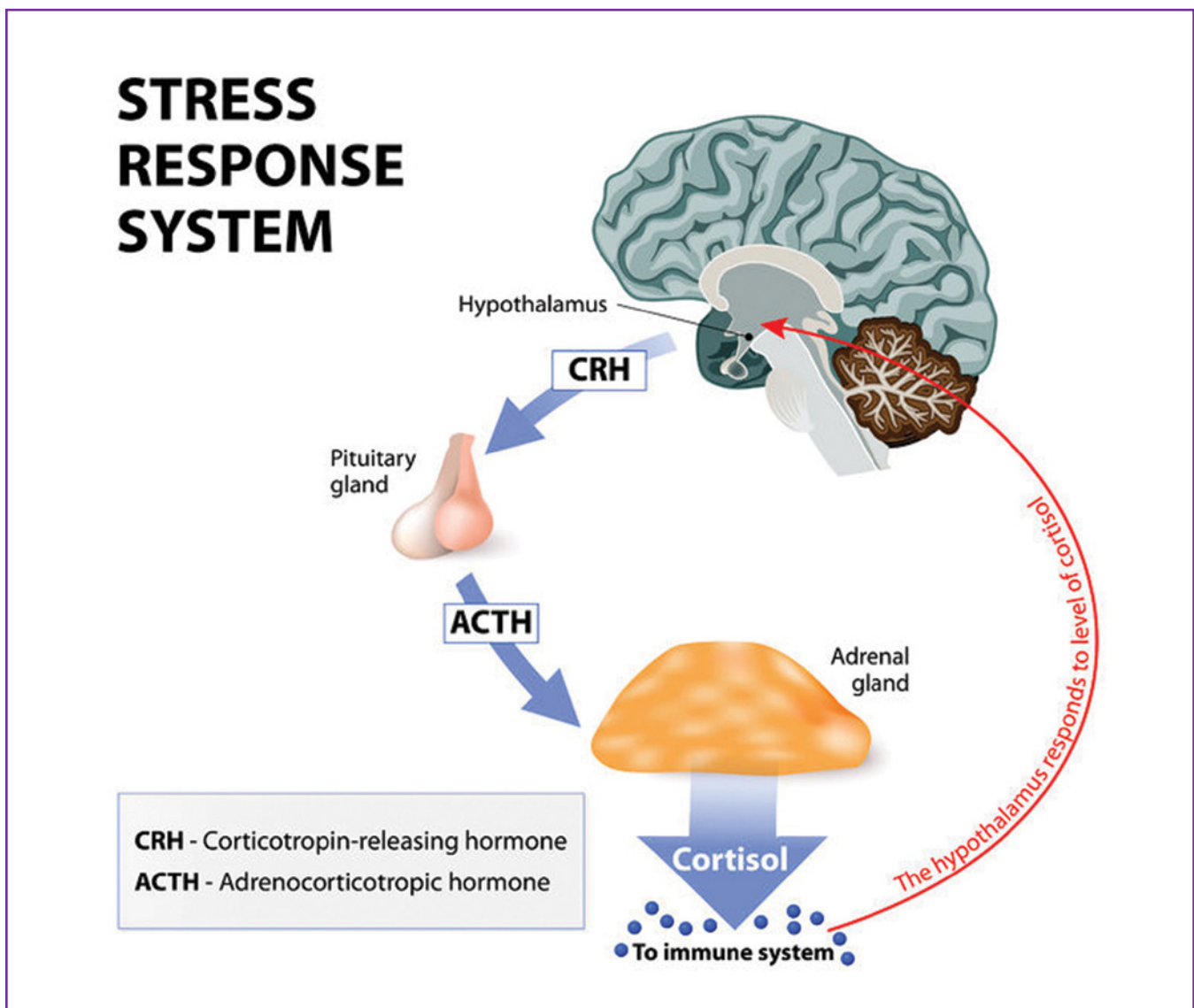


Cortisol maintains blood sugar levels, and insulin helps our cells absorb glucose. When we have long-term stress (sitting for hours is considered stress), both insulin and cortisol remain elevated in the blood, and the extra glucose is stored as fat—mostly in the abdomen.

In modern-day thinking we most often associate stress to our emotions, yet few of us really understand the intense effect it has on us physically. The most



frustrating way that it affects us is by storing any calories that are not absolutely necessary, and most often the storage occurs in the abdominal area and thighs. The real problem here is that these physiological responses take place whether the threat is real or not. Because most of the everyday stressors we experience on a day-to-day basis, like sitting, don't require the true fight or flight response, we are opening up our body to do something that it really doesn't need to be doing. And since most of the time there is no imminent danger sitting at a



desk, we really don't need the extra calories our body is so efficiently storing in preparation for survival.

See the connection?

The psoas is more important than you think.

But what does this mean on a grand scale for overall health?

Many consider the psoas the most important muscle in the body and to disregard the role this powerful player has in the body is foolish. Everyone wants to live healthy and happy, but most become stuck in their normal routines without wanting to make changes.

Not that this is a bad thing, but it can become a bad thing if our typical behavior includes unhealthy habits. And the unfortunate part is that the habits we have created will become our stumbling block in life.

We write this not to discourage you, but to give you hope, and to show you a way to improve your quality of life, improve your performance, reduce pain and discomfort, and to lose that bulging belly that has been bothering you for years.

## A TIGHT PSOAS CAN MAKE YOU LOOK FAT

How we look tends to be a priority when we get ready each morning. Even late at night most people put effort into looking 'good'. But, what if I told you that having tight hips could make you look a little distorted? And by distorted, I mean fat. In a culture that craves attention and longs for acceptance, the psoas and its affect on your posture could be your best friend or your worst enemy.



Have you ever noticed someone who is very skinny and yet they have what looks to be a potbelly stomach? A tight psoas can give someone that potbelly stomach and the crazy part is that it's not necessarily about being or having too much belly fat. **The skinniest of persons can have that 'fat' belly look just from having poor posture that could be directly linked to a tight psoas.**

When the tight psoas messes with the belly it is really a space issue rather than a fat issue. A fat issue will always look and feel like fat but a space issue looks and feels much different. Fat is soft and pudgy but when the psoas is to blame for this 'fat' look, the spine becomes out of whack forcing the abdomen to protrude forward. A potbelly stomach from tight hips usually has no fat to take hold of—the belly is fairly hard and somewhat rigid.

So exactly how does the psoas cause this belly bulge?

The psoas attaches the legs to the spine through a connection from the back





half of the inner thigh and along the lower portion of the spine. A long and happy psoas moves down from the spine and curls around the back of the pelvis before making its way forward, down and back to attach on the inner thigh bone. Many organs and muscles sit in front of the psoas and can be easily shifted when pressure or movement is applied.

But when the integrity of the psoas is compromised from sitting all day and not properly training the hips, anterior pelvic tilt is the result. And this is how the belly bulge pops out all from the forward tilting of the pelvis.



A tight psoas pulls forward off the back of the pelvis and moves everything in front of it. This includes both the small and large intestines, which is why a tight psoas can affect our digestion in a huge way. This can happen when one or both of the psoas is tight. The tighter the psoas the more pressure is placed on organs and other muscles and this will cause unwanted changes in your bodily functions as well as restriction in your physical movement.

You need to know if you actually have anterior pelvic tilt or whether your pelvic tilt is normal for your body. A certain degree of anterior pelvic tilt is normal in humans and women tend to have more anterior pelvic tilt than men. One clue is the actual shape of your spine.

If you are wondering if you have this issue simply take off your shirt and stand sideways looking in the mirror. What you will see is one of three reflections; **1)** you are fat and there's no way around it, **2)** you are thin with this oddly curved spine



with this potbelly look, or **3**) you look pretty balanced and somewhat ‘normal’. Knowing how you look is an easy way to see if you suffer from tight hips. However, this isn’t the only indicator that shows tightness. You could possibly have great posture but still suffer from psoas tightness (and weakness in surrounding muscles) so do not base your diagnosis on this crude assessment but generally speaking you should be able to see how your abdomen and spine line up.

This condition of the psoas and appearance of what looks like a potbelly stomach is one of the best reasons for actively participating in the lengthening and correction of the psoas. You will be able to learn more about these essential techniques later in this book but certain positions like laying flat on your back in a relaxed position allows the psoas to fall back towards its natural location deep within the pelvis.

**By returning back to the body’s natural design through the restoration program that we have put together for you, you will be able to create a better space for the psoas, abdominal organs and muscles. And in return, all the systems in your body will be connected and begin to work harmoniously and not independently.**

## PSOAS AND ITS EFFECTS ON EMOTIONS AND ENERGY

Do you ever think about how stress just seems to linger around the less active we are throughout the day? And isn't it rather confusing how sitting around all day, not burning energy, tends to make us more tired than if we ran 10 miles?

After spending a good amount of time reading books on health and 'functional' exercise, I instantly realized what a significant amount of people were doing wrong, and honestly I was doing it wrong as well. By learning to relax my psoas, I was literally energizing my deepest core muscle by reconnecting with the powerful energy of the mind.



The psoas is far more than a core stabilizing muscle; it is an organ of perception made up of incredible bio-intelligent tissue that literally expresses our deepest urge for survival, and our basic desire to thrive.

The human body (mind included) has been set apart from other creatures of this earth by many characteristics and the ability to experience and express emotions is a main one. The psoas grounds us to our surroundings similar to that of a grounding wire in a circuit. Once the spine is open and grounded, the spine can become alive and then be able to perform the inherent functions it was originally designed to do.



What this means for you is that your emotions are connected in with the psoas through the fascia and nerves surrounding it. When your emotions are stressed and heightened, that fear, guilt, or anger travels through the nerves in the psoas to the spinal column and then to the brain, which is the headquarters for our emotions. Your psoas in this process is acting like a messenger from the mid-section to the central nervous system sending the information to your brain.

Now if your psoas is healthy and free then the information transmitted to your brain will be accurate and have clarity. If however your psoas is unhealthy, tight and cramped then the information will be unclear and you will most likely feel emotional discomfort in the process of delivery of this information from spine to brain.

## **The benefit of having a released psoas is that you will feel more grounded and relaxed.**

Physically, you will be more flexible and have more mobility in every day movements with much less stiffness and achiness. The dangers of having a tight psoas can be obvious in back and hip pain and even ankle and knee pain. In addition to physical pain or discomfort, a tight psoas is very fatiguing as the psoas directly connects to our diaphragm.

The psoas connects to the diaphragm through connective tissue, which affects our breath and our capacity to feel fear. Both the psoas and the connective tissue can hold stress that affect not only the muscle and its movements, but also our emotional balance and calmness. Our psoas is the connector between the pelvis and the brain and it guides that connection and supports it. You could say the psoas is the 'bridge' between your logical and intuitive abilities.

A healthy functioning psoas is the mark of energy showing both play and creative expression. Instead of the shortened psoas which will stay contracted until it's



properly treated, the relaxed and released psoas is ready to lengthen and open to dance, run, play and move at any time!

So when you have open, functioning hips and a strong mobile lower back you are more easily playful, creatively free, possibly somewhat calmer, and better equipped to handle stress. The emotions that emerge throughout the day due to living and working will be transmitted freely with clarity and will flow with ease through your psoas to your brain.

Without suffering through pain or discomfort, released hips will subsequently eliminate any unnecessary fear that we may encounter.

Fear is that one emotion that stops us from experiencing and embracing the unknown. Fear is that feeling that forbids a calm life.

Fear restricts us from thriving and puts us in a forced position of survival and we've already read that when in this 'survival' state, the body immediately begins to shut down, hold stress, and prepare for the worst.

Most young children have very little fear, and you know if you have ever spent time watching kids at play that they really have something to teach us about living freely.

Fear and the body's reaction to this powerful emotion can be reduced and significantly improved through the release and repair of the psoas. Don't waste another day struggling through this short life that we have.

Don't be held back from living life to its fullest and allowing the body maximum performance in everything you do. We were made to thrive and enjoy this life with vigor, strength, and vitality.



## WHY STATIC STRETCHING ALONE ISN'T THE ANSWER

Knowing you have tight hip flexors is one thing.

Knowing how to fix your hip flexors is another challenge altogether.

If you trust so-called experts on Youtube and online, they'll have you believe it's simply a case of holding a few static stretches for a period of time to try and lengthen the muscle.

Or rolling around with a tennis ball stuck to your hip (as if that will really make any difference).



It takes more than a tennis ball and foam roller to unlock your hip flexors...and doing it wrong could cause even MORE damage.

The reason few people manage to fix their hip flexors is simple.

**It's really a hard area to reach.**

If you see how the psoas is attached within your body, it's buried deep inside your core making it tough to access. It's a hard muscle to find, let alone train.



So it's little wonder why trying to loosen it requires more than a simple static hip flexor stretch like the one below you've probably tried before.

You've probably found you're spending (or wasting) hours of your time stretching this way only to find it's having minimal effect.

That's because you need to attack the muscle from a variety of angles using a variety of exercise techniques and modalities in order to "unpack" the muscle in the right way.

The truth is, you can learn to release your tight hip flexors on your own.

If you think of your psoas as a combination safe lock, there are several numbers that will unlock it but they need to be entered in the right order.

There are a number of specific movements beyond simple static stretching you can use to unlock and loosen your hips, legs and back.

Some of these include:

- **PNF Stretching:** PNF is an acronym for proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation. It is a technique where you are activating a specific muscle in order to relax the muscles around a joint so you can decrease the stiffness around a joint.
- **Dynamic Stretching:** This is where you are activating the muscle around a joint and moving that joint through its full range of motion in a progressive manner. This leads to an increased range of motion around the joint, warming up of the muscle around the joint and improved circulation around the joint. Think of high knees or butt kicks.

- **3-Dimensional Core Stability Exercises:** With these exercises we are targeting the muscle in all planes of movement so the core and abdominal muscles have good activation, endurance and strength in all planes of movement which leads to a decrease in unnecessary damaging stress on joints.
- **Mobility Exercises:** In these exercises, we are targeting the joint and doing movements and exercises that help the joint function optimally. This allows a joint to move more freely.
- **Fascia Stretching:** In this unique technique, we are targeting the tissue that muscles are surrounded in and working on loosening and lengthening the fascia. Few people understand the negative effect this tissue can have on your body.
- **Muscle Activation Movements:** Due to all of our sitting and daily technology use, many of our muscles are not working properly. With this technique, we're targeting those muscles that are off and activate them in order to help the body move more efficiently.

Now you know the specific techniques you need to unlock your hip flexors, the next question is how to combine these in the most effective way.

Like unfolding a sheet or unpacking a parcel, opening up the muscles in your hips requires it to be done in the right order.

Try to release one muscle before another and you'll add to your tightness. Getting it wrong really can make it worse.

It's why so many people give up trying to fix the problem themselves and believe

incorrectly that they have to live with the problem. But hoping the problem will go away by not exercising is just as damaging.

However, it's not all about the exercises.

The power of the technique lies not only in what techniques are performed and how well, but in doing these in the proper sequence. Done effectively, what we call "The Sequential Flow Method," works with your body to activate its natural healing process, improve flexibility while adding strength and vitality.

Doing the movements in the right order unravels all the tissues including muscle, fascia, connective tissue, and the joint capsule while breaking up scar tissue.

Using the right sequence kick starts an increase in blood flow to the area to clean out metabolites and lactic acid and reduces inflammation while nourishing and rejuvenating the area.

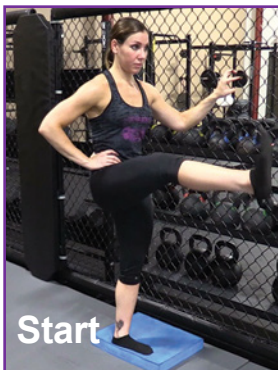
### **Introducing "Unlock Your Hip Flexors"**

The Unlock Your Hip Flexors program will give you a practical, easy-to-follow program you can use today for an immediate release of your hip flexors for more strength, better health and all day energy.

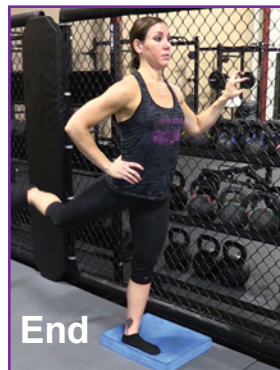


## THE ROUTINE

### #1: 3-Way Leg Swings (Dynamic Stretching)

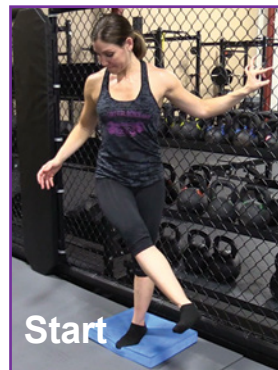


Start

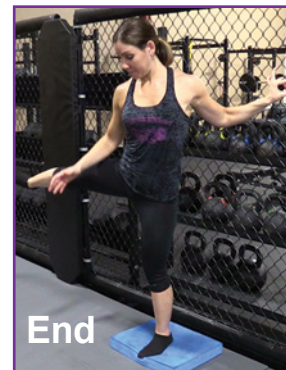


End

**Leg Swings Forward and Back**

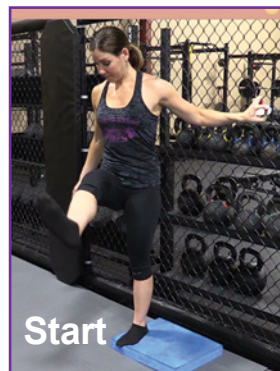


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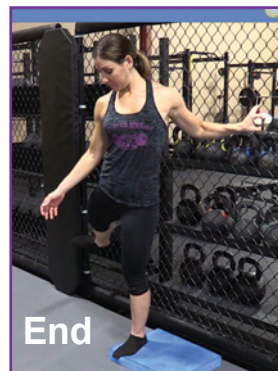


End

**Leg Swings Sideways**



Start



End

**Leg Swings at 45-Degrees Angle**

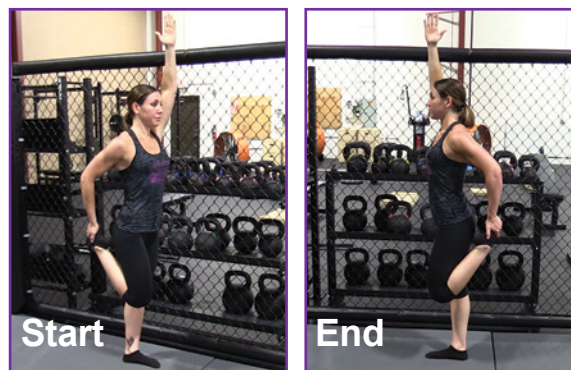
*(5 times total or you can progress to 10 times total)*

**Instruction:** Keep the pelvis parallel to the floor. Stand on a pad or block that is 1 to 2 inches in height. Standing on one leg, swing your opposite leg forward and back for 5 repetitions each way for a total of 10 repetitions. Then, swing your leg sideways for 5 repetitions each way for a total of 10 repetitions. Lastly, swing your leg at a 45-degree angle for 5 repetitions each way for a total of 10 repetitions. When finished, switch to the other leg and repeat.

## #2: Quad Stretch & Reach Overhead With Your Opposite Arm (Static Stretching)



Quad Stretch



Quad Stretch & Reach Overhead With Your Opposite Arm

*(2 repetitions with each stretch held for 20 seconds)*

**Instruction:** With the same side hand, grab the top of your foot and pull your heel towards your seat until you feel a light stretch in front of your thigh. To intensify the stretch, bring the knee back a bit and keep the abdominal area tight. Hold the stretch for 20 seconds and then perform the stretch on the opposite leg. Do this stretch twice on each leg. You can progress the stretch by bringing the opposite arm overhead. If this is difficult for you to do, you can place your opposite arm on the wall for balance.



### #3: 90 90 Kneeling Stretch with Arm Overhead (Static Stretching)



#### 90 90 Kneeling Stretch with Arm Overhead

*(2 repetitions on each side with each stretch held for 20 seconds)*

**Instruction:** Start in a 90 90 kneeling position. Keep your hips, knee and ankle in a 90 degrees position. Flatten out the back foot on the ground to intensify the stretch. Tighten up the abdominal area and bring your arm overhead. Contract your glutes and bring the hips forward, look for a light stretch in front of your thigh (rectus femoris) and pelvis area (iliacus muscle). Hold the stretch for 20 seconds and then perform the stretch on the opposite leg. Do this stretch twice on each leg.



## #4.A: Table Hip Flexor Stretch (Fascial Stretching)



### Table Hip Flexor Stretch

*(2 repetitions on each side with each stretch held for 20 seconds)*

**Instruction:** Grab the top of your foot with your opposite hand and pull it towards your seat as you lean the top of your foot on a table or plinth for balance. Raise the arm on the same side and side bend of the bent knee. You are looking for a light stretch throughout the knee, abdominal area, and all the way up to the arm. To intensify the stretch, you can bring the knee outwards. Hold the stretch for 20 seconds and perform twice on each side.

## #4.B: 90 90 Kneeling Stretch with Side Bending (Static Stretching)

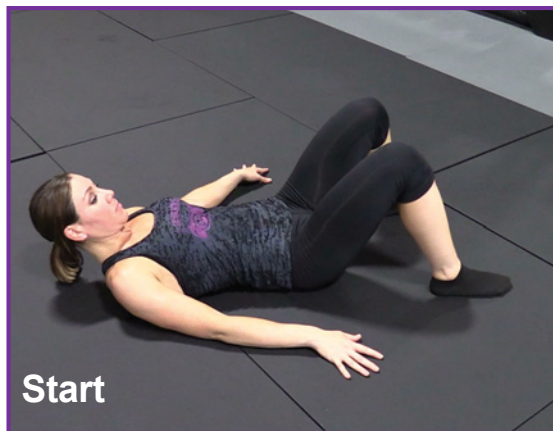


### 90 90 Kneeling Stretch with Side Bending

*(2 repetitions on each side with each stretch held for 20 seconds)*

**Instruction:** Get into a 90 90 kneeling position with back foot flat on the ground. Bring the arms straight overhead with your palm facing inwards. Do a side bending by bringing the pelvis out and bending through the back. To intensify the stretch, you can bring the heel out to the side a little bit. You are looking for a light stretch in front of your quads (rectus femoris) and deep in your hip/back area (psoas muscle). Hold the stretch for 20 seconds and perform twice on each side.

## #5: On Back Knees In and Out (Dynamic Stretching)



### On Back Knees In and Out

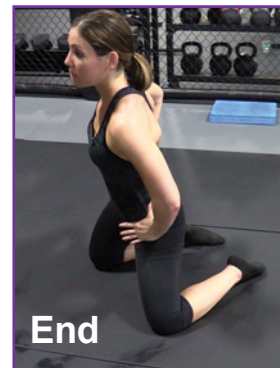
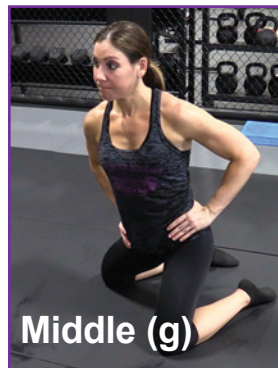
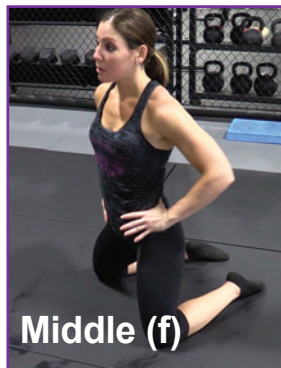
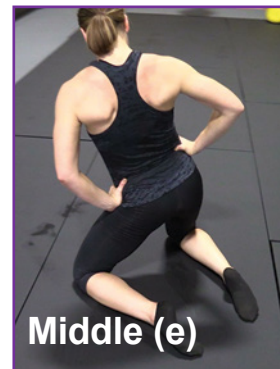
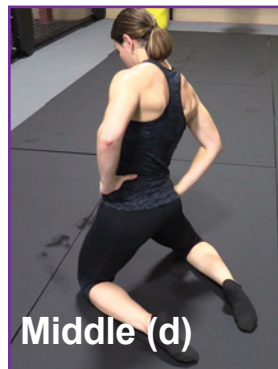
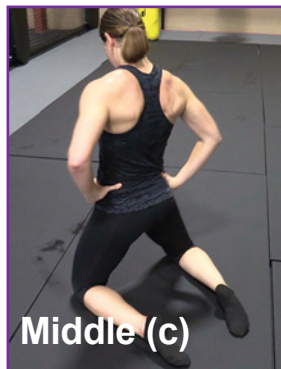
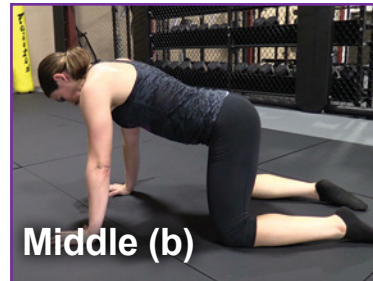
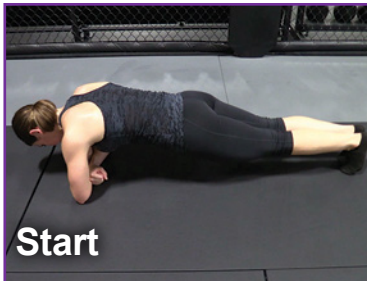
*(10 repetitions total (5 repetitions each way) with a 2 second hold)*

**Instruction:** Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet hip-width apart. Drop the knees from side to side. To intensify the stretch, you can separate the feet a bit further and do the side-to-side knee drops. Hold each drop for 2 seconds with 5 repetitions on each side.





## #6: Four Point Hip Back into Hip Rocking & Mobility (Mobility Exercise)



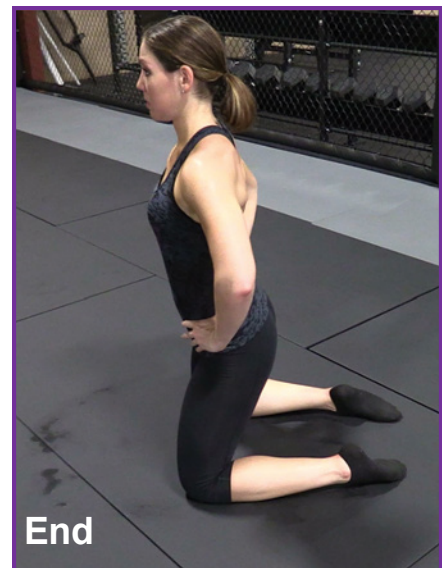
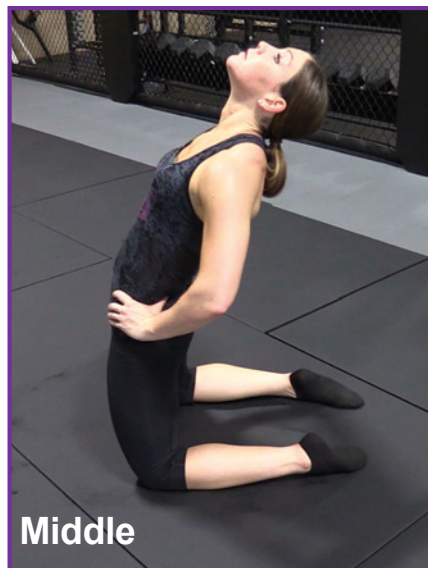
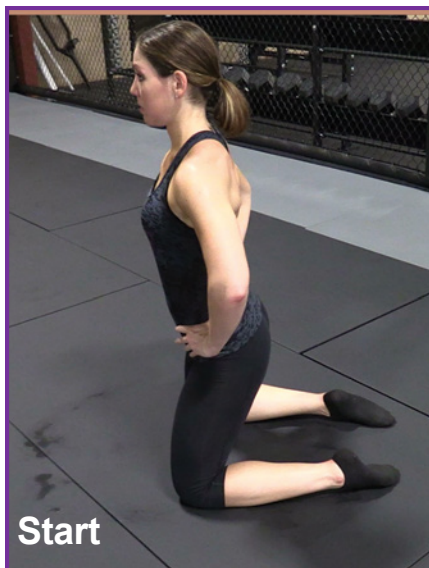
### Four Point Hip Back into Hip Rocking & Mobility

*10 repetitions (5 repetitions each way)*

**Instruction:** Go into a four-point position with knees hip-width apart. Rock your

hips back, focusing on the movement occurring in your hip and not in your lower back. If your lower back moves or curls, then separate your knees further until your back does not curl during the rocking back movement. When you find the position where there is only hip movement, you come back up into a kneeling position and rock your hips from side to side. You then rock your hips from side to side for 5 repetitions and a hold 2 seconds on each side. Then, you rock your hips at an angle for three repetitions each way and a hold 2 seconds on each side.

## #7: Hip & Back Extension (Mobility Exercise)



### Hip & Back Extension

*(1 set of 5 repetitions with a 2 second hold)*

**Instruction:** Get into a kneeling position with hands on your hips. Arch your back for 2 seconds and then return to the neutral position. Do 5 repetitions.



## #8: Heel Into Wall (PNF Stretching)



### Heel Into Wall

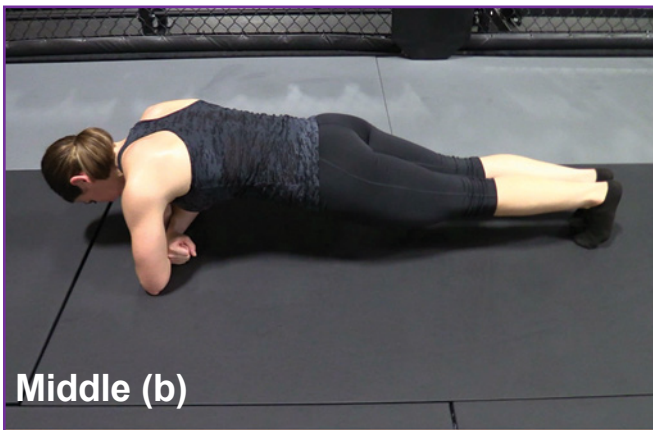
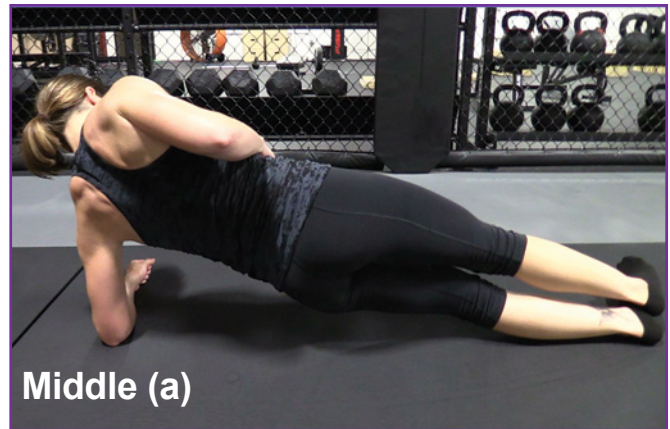
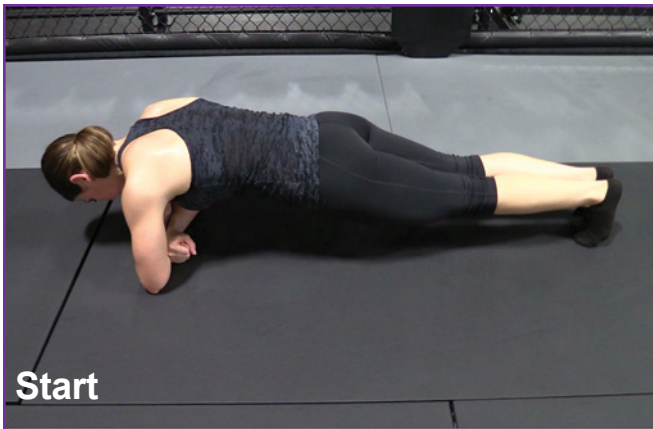
*(1 set of 6 repetitions, done for 6 seconds at 10% maximal contraction)*

**Instruction:** Lie on the floor on your stomach and place your forehead on your hands. Bend your knee to 90 degrees and rest the outside of your foot against a wall. Use your hip muscles to push the outer part of your foot into the wall at a 10% muscle effort level for 6 seconds, relax and push in again. To intensify the stretch, you can move a bit away from the wall and go through it again. Do 1 set of 6 repetitions with 6 seconds hold each way. When finished, switch to the other leg and repeat.



# THE KEY TO STRENGTH & VITALITY

## #9: Front to Side Plank (3 Dimensional Core Stability Exercise)



### Front to Side Plank

*(1 Set of 10 Repetitions (5 repetitions on each side) with a 2 second hold)*



## #9 Continued: Front to Side Plank with Leg Kicks



Front Plank (Start)



Front Plank (End)



Side Plank (Start)



Side Plank (End)

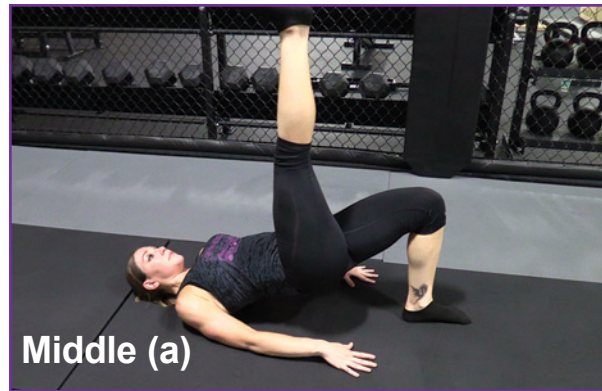
### Front to Side Plank with Leg Kicks

*(1 Set of 10 Repetitions (5 repetitions on each side) with a 2 second hold)*

**Instruction:** Go into a front plank position; keep the rest of your body in good alignment. Roll over to the side and prop your body up, make a straight line from your shoulders to your ankles and hold this side plank position for 2 seconds and come back to the front plank position. Transition into a side plank on your other side; make sure your body is in good alignment. To make it more challenging, you can add leg kicks when doing the front plank position or bring the leg up to the side when doing the side plank position.



## #10: Single Leg Gluteus Bridge (Muscle Activation)



### Single Leg Gluteus Bridge

*(1 Set of 10 Repetitions (5 repetitions on each side) with a 2 second hold)*

**Instruction:** Lie on your back and brace your abs and core. Bridge your hips up and have one leg extended straight in front of you while the opposite leg is bent on the floor. Hold this position for 2 seconds. Lower the leg that is in the air back down to the starting position, switch to the other leg and repeat the action. If this is difficult for you, just stay in the bridge position and hold it for 2 seconds and back down.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

### RICK KASELJ, MS

Rick Kaselj is the “go-to” guy when it comes to overcoming injuries and pain, but most of his learning does not come from books and seminars but from his own struggles with injuries and pain.

Rick’s journey into living a pain-free life started with a severe back injury caused from working out the wrong way. The injury threatened to end his professional career and prevent him from living a full and happy life. Rick did not want a life of pain, appointments and drugs so he began to search for a solution to overcome his crippling back pain.

Using himself as a guinea pig he developed techniques and strategies to overcome his back injury and has used these same effective techniques with over a hundred thousand clients, professionals, viewers and readers to overcome back, shoulder, knee, elbow and many other pains.

On a daily basis Rick helps over 80,000 people from 137 countries (including Antarctica) live a healthier and pain-free life and Rick has taught his techniques to well over 8,152 health and fitness professionals from around the world.



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FLEXORS**

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**STRENGTH & VITALITY**

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If you have a pain or injury, or if you know of anyone with a pain or injury, then you should check out Rick Kaselj at [ExercisesForInjuries.com](http://ExercisesForInjuries.com)

**Connect With Rick:**

**Rick's Gift For You:**

<http://www.shoulderpainsolved.com/8-most-dangerous-exercises-for-your-back>

**Industry Leading Injury Solutions:**

<http://www.exercisesforinjuries.com/products/>

**Exercises For Injuries Facebook Fan Page:**

<http://www.facebook.com/ExercisesForInjuries>

**Exercises For Injuries YouTube:**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/ExercisesForInjuries>



## MIKE WESTERDAL

Mike Westerdal is a personal trainer, kettlebell instructor and founder of CriticalBench.com, the internet's largest strength site helping half a million people per month achieve their strength & health goals.



With a background in sports training and powerlifting, Mike has teamed up with the industry's leading Injury Specialist Rick Kaselj, MS in order to overcome their personal injuries and nagging pain.

Together their mission is share the Fix My Pain series with others that are interested in fixing their own injuries and combating pain without appointments, medications or going under the knife in order to live life to the fullest in and out of the gym.

Mike resides in sunny Clearwater, Florida with his beautiful wife Courtney and two children Karina and Lincoln.

### Connect With Mike:

**Mike's Gifts For You:** <http://www.criticalbench.com/free-stuff/>

**Industry Leading Solutions:** <http://www.criticalbench.com/products/>

**Critical Bench Facebook Fan Page:** <http://www.facebook.com/criticalbench>

**Critical Bench YouTube:** <http://www.youtube.com/criticalbench>

## OTHER PRODUCTS FROM MIKE AND RICK

### Fix My Back Pain

Do you suffer from back pain? If so, then I have some great news for you. Instead of going to pointless doctor appointments, spending \$\$\$ on expensive medication or surgery, you can get the all-natural solution to your pain with The Fix My Back Pain System.



This system is strategically designed to get you back to pain free workouts using the BR3 method which will reshape your back and eliminate the pain once and for all.

This has worked on thousands of happy customers world wide and can do the same for you today.

[Fix Your Back Pain With The BR3 Method](#)

### Fix My Shoulder Pain

Fix My Shoulder Pain was created by Injury Specialist Rick Kaselj, MS. Utilizing his trademarked SR3 Method which is short for "Shoulder Reshaping 3-Part Method", Rick is literally making headlines world wide. Rather than just stretching and strengthening which only provides temporary relief Rick's Method

actually reconstructs the shoulder joint from the outside and inside.

Fix My shoulder Pain and the SR3 Method is the first shoulder injury system ever created to help you get back to pain free workouts by focusing on alignment, tissue quality and activation & endurance. The best part; this program has been specifically designed to help serious fitness enthusiasts who want to avoid expensive and time consuming appointments and would prefer an alternative to medication or surgery.

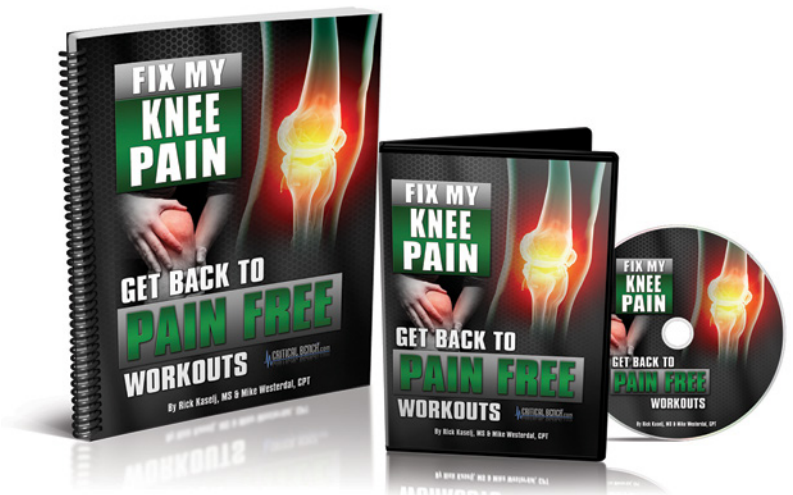


[Get Back To Pain Free Workouts By Fixing Your Shoulders Without Appointments, Medications or Surgery.](#)

## Fix My Knee Pain

Get Back To Pain Free Workouts By Fixing Your Knees Without Appointments, Medications or Surgery.

Escape a Major Blowout & Fix Your Knees in Just Minutes... So You Can Get Back to Your 100% Intensity Pain-Free Workouts...WITHOUT Feeling Bullied Into Time-Wasting





Appointments, Expensive Medications or Going Under the Knife.

[Get Back To Pain Free Workouts By Fixing Your Knees Without Appointments, Medications or Surgery.](#)

## 101 Superfoods That Stop Your Joint Pain & Inflammation

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In order to prevent this from happening, you must eat certain superfoods filled with the right vitamins and minerals to FIGHT these harmful diseases.

This is exactly what you get with this program.

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