

Gluteal Strain

Strained gluteal muscles are partial tears of the small fibers within the gluteal muscles. These muscles are a grouping of three muscles that are located in the buttocks. This is not an uncommon injury and is occasionally seen in runners, other athletes and dancers.

Gluteal strains are often caused by a stretching of the gluteal muscles beyond the normal amount of tension they are able to withstand normally, a direct blow to that of the muscles themselves, using the muscles too much on any given day and suddenly placing a lot of stress on the muscles when they aren't ready to handle the stress.

Gluteal strains are not particularly common, as the muscles are very strong and they don't usually go beyond their normal range of movement. In comparison, a hamstring strain is far more common.

Gluteal Strain Anatomy

The gluteal muscles originate from the pelvis and are inserted into the top of the thigh bone. Gluteal muscles are the ones primarily responsible for being able to straighten the hip during any activity, which helps to stabilize the pelvis and assist with outer movements of the hip. They are also responsible for extension to the leg (i.e. imagine you are standing up and move your leg behind you). They are also involved in rotation to the hip joint.

Gluteal muscles tend to be quite active when running, squatting, jumping and lunging. During a gluteal contraction, tension is placed throughout the muscles. Whenever the tension becomes too much because of excessive repetition or high forces, one or more of these muscles could end up tearing. Gluteal strains can also be caused by suddenly planting the leg to change direction, or when lunging. An example would be when playing squash and you lunge to get to the ball.

Gluteal muscles typically get very tight, and can become quite fibrous. Seeing a therapist every few weeks/months to loosen up the glutes can be very effective at reducing the prevalence of injury to the area, or stopping aching into the buttock.

How to Treat a Gluteal Strain:

Most gluteal strains are best treated by a therapist. Any manual therapist will be able to treat it, using techniques such as massage, stretching, electrotherapy and strengthening exercises.

1. Stretches

By using proper stretching techniques, you can help to strengthen the muscles and prevent them from tightening up on you from everyday use. Use stretches once the tear or strain has healed to increase the length of the muscle. Seek guidance from your Rehab My Patient therapist.



2. Ice

Apply ice to the site for five to ten minutes, three to five times per day. Ice will help to alleviate any swelling and minimize the amount of pain felt.

3. Anti-Inflammatory Medication

To help reduce pain and allow you to rest and relax, an anti-inflammatory can come into the picture and help provide you with the relief you need. Do not use this however to participate in sport. If your injury is not fully healed, rest. Make sure you seek advice from your doctor before taking NSAIDs or anti-inflammatories as they can have some harmful effects on the body. If in doubt just use the ice.

4. Progressive Exercise

Engaging in progressive exercises will help to improve flexibility, strength, balance and core stability. In strengthening your muscles and joints, you can help to improve your condition and begin the process to regaining movement.

Tips:

- When it comes to working out and exercising, you want to make sure you are engaging in training activities properly and for a certain amount of time.
- Take the time to warm-up before you go out and start exercising and engaging in any physical activities.
- If you didn't get the proper rehabilitation after a previous lower back injury or gluteal injury, you could end up suffering with a gluteal strain.
- Allow time for your body to recover after any activities or sports.
- Maintaining proper posture is important when it comes to alleviating undue pressure on the joints and muscles.
- Maintaining proper fitness levels is crucial to being able to prevent any undue injuries or illnesses from occurring in the first place.