

Hip Flexor Strain

The hip flexor muscles provide you with the ability to lift your leg and bend down at the waist, as well as sitting up when lying down. The hip flexor muscle comprises of the psoas and iliacus which join together to form the iliopsoas. It is possible to get a strain to the muscle or tendon, located near to the groin.

A strain is a tearing or stretching of the tendons or muscles, which are bands of tissue connecting the bone and the muscle together. The tendon can become inflamed. Inflammation of the tendon is referred to as tendinitis.

These strains can occur from overusing the muscles allowing you to flex your knee or perform a high kick. The injury commonly occurs in cyclists, athletes who run or jump using a high knee kick, people who practice martial arts and soccer players who perform a number of forceful kicking activities. Soccer players typically go to kick the ball and catch the foot in the ground, tearing the hip flexor.

Hip Flexor Strain Anatomy

The hip is a ball and socket joint connecting the thigh bone (femur) to the pelvis socket. It allows the leg to move. The hip joint is composed of multiple parts, including that of the lesser and greater trochanters. The greater trochanter is the place where countless muscles from the buttocks allow and meet to promote hip abduction and movement from one side to the other. When it comes to the lesser trochanter, this is the point where the iliopsoas muscle is attached to the hip joint to provide for forward movement within the leg, which is otherwise referred to as hip flexion.

The iliopsoas muscle attaches to 5 lumbar vertebrae located in the lower back, and to the front of the hip. It's a strong muscle with large attachments. It is assisted by other muscles such as the abdominal muscles, and the quadricep muscles.

How to Treat a Hip Flexor Strain:

1. Ice

Use ice on the affected area for 5-10 minutes three to five times per day. Make sure to wrap the ice in a cloth to prevent an ice burn from occurring. Place the ice pack over the groin at the front of your hip.



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2. Ice Massage

An ice massage also works well. Freeze some water in a Styrofoam cup, peel the top part of the cup down so the ice is exposed, hold onto the cup bottom and rub the ice over the area for 5-10 minutes at a time. Repeating this multiple times per day will help to relieve the pain.

3. Anti-Inflammatory Medication

Taking an anti-inflammatory medication can help to reduce the swelling and inflammation in the short term. Personally we prefer recommending ice and heat, but your doctor might prescribe you anti-inflammatories. Just make sure you take them with/after food.

4. Exercise

Follow the instructions provided by your therapist for performing exercises to aid in the recovery process. You will be effectively strengthening the area and helping to prevent any additional injuries from occurring.

5. Heat

During the recovery stage you might also benefit from using heat for 10-15 minutes at a time over the front of the hip. It can also be used before performing any stretching exercises of warming up. Avoid using heat if you already have swelling in the area.

6. Therapy

Physiotherapy, sports massage, and other forms of therapy can be very useful. Your therapist will likely use massage techniques, and rehabilitation. They might also use some electrotherapy or acupuncture.

Tips:

- Always make sure to warm up before you begin any sprinting or fast-paced activities.
- If you are a cyclist, you need to make sure the seat is raised to the appropriate height.
- Once you have full range of movement and the strength has come back, you can safely return to your normal activities.
- If you are limping or suffering with pain, you need to refrain from any physical activities and seek more treatment from your therapist.
- Don't sit down for long hours, get up and move around every 30 minutes if you have sustained a hip flexor injury.