

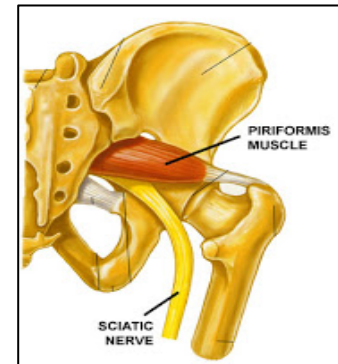


PIRIFORMIS SYNDROME



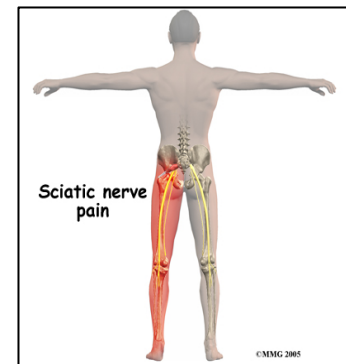
What causes piriformis syndrome?

Piriformis syndrome occurs when the piriformis muscle in your buttocks compresses on the sciatic nerve causing pain and sensation changes in the buttocks and possibly down into the leg and foot. Compression can be caused by muscle tightness, spasms, or imbalances. Stiff pelvic joints, poor posture, flat feet, and overuse or trauma to the piriformis and joints of the pelvis can also cause it.



Where does piriformis syndrome occur?

Piriformis syndrome typically starts in the buttocks where the sciatic nerve passes under or through the piriformis muscle. The piriformis muscle is a skinny, flat muscle located in the middle of the buttocks near the top of the hip joint. This muscle normally acts to stabilize the hip joint and lift and rotate the thigh away from the body. The sciatic nerve brings sensation and strength to the leg all the way down to the foot.



What are possible signs and symptoms?

- Starts with pain, tingling, or numbness in the buttocks
- It can extend from the buttocks down the back side of the leg to the foot
- Pain with bringing knee up towards opposite shoulder
- Weakness with moving hip out to side and rotating away from the body
- Increases with sitting or running

How does physical therapy help?

- Stretching – tight leg muscles
- Use of a foam roller
- Core stabilization and strengthening
- Manual therapy – massage, muscle energy techniques, mobilization
- Education about posture, body mechanics, and activity modification
- Modalities – electrical stimulation, ultrasound, cold laser

