

# NERANG PHYSIOTHERAPY

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The *difference* is obvious

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## Chronic pain

Chronic pain is an ongoing problem in our society and there are not many avenues for treatment offered in the main-stream.

This form of pain is described as long-lasting, usually over 3 months but in many cases it stretches to years rather than months.

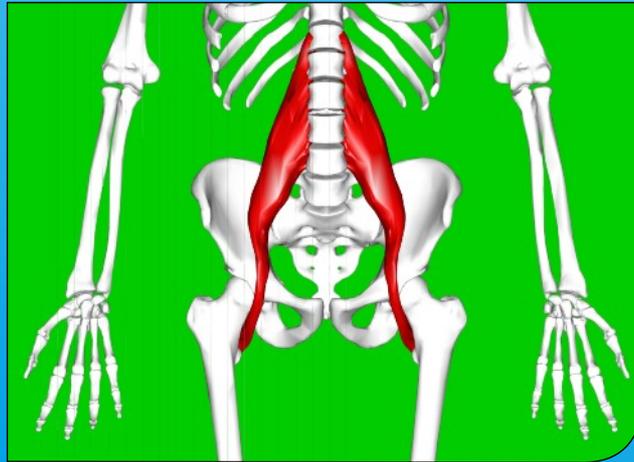
In my experience with chronic pain there are a few underlying fundamentals that need to be assessed. One of these is the blood flow control. Many sufferers of chronic pain have poor blood flow rate and this reduces oxygen levels in the soft tissues and muscles resulting in pain.

The other aspects are tightening of the soft tissue called fascia and muscle weakness which cannot be improved with strengthening exercises. These 3 aspects result in pain not going away and if left un-treated will result in an ongoing problem.

I have had very good results with chronic pain as I target these 3 aspects of it but you have to be aware it takes time for the body to get unwell so it takes time to get better too.

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## BACK TO FRONT

What's the first thing that comes to mind when someone says they have back pain. The back is the problem? Unfortunately many therapists think the same thing, so their first target is always the back.

Strangely enough, most lower back pain is caused by tightness and weakness of muscles that are actually in the front of the body. These muscles are known as the iliopsoas muscles and are attached to the front-inside of the thigh bone and go back to attach to the lumbar vertebrae, (see diagram).

In modern society in the west we tend to do many things that can assist in this muscle and its associated soft tissue tightening/shortening. Examples of this are sitting long periods, exercises such as sit-ups and straight leg raises. However, the most common problem is sitting and not just when we are adults.

## Merry Christmas

We would like to take this opportunity to say Merry Christmas to all those who celebrate at this time of year. May you have a peaceful holiday and if you are travelling, drive safe and don't trust anyone else on the road.

This problem starts when we are very young. Compared to other cultures such as the Asians and Africans where they still squat mostly and babies are carried until they can walk, as kids we are stuck in baby seats, prams and car seats.

And so begins our journey into tight hip flexors and poor posture. As these iliopsoas muscles attach to the lumbar spine they put increased pressure on the spine and pull the vertebrae closer together, thus increasing the pressure on our discs in the lower back.

Continuous pressure over an extended period of time will lead to back pain and possibly to disc compression problems including pinched nerves. Hence this tightening in the front of the hip/back complex is a great cause of lower back issues.

At Nerang Physiotherapy we treat back pain from the front with a big focus on the iliopsoas muscles as without this flexibility in the front the back will not function well and it will also cause weakness of the abdominals.

## EXERCISE OF THE MONTH:

### Hip crossover

Hips are hips but they are not always hip. This is an exercise to improve rotation of the hips and lower back.

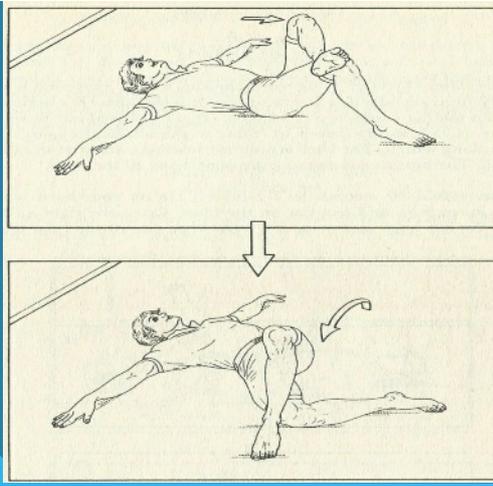
Lie on your back with both knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Cross the left ankle over the right knee and press the left knee out toward the feet. While maintaining this position, lower your left foot to the right side and place it flat on the floor.

Keep the left knee pressing up towards the ceiling to feel a stretch in the area of the left hip. Hold this position until you feel the stretch has eased off, this will allow your soft tissues to adapt to the stretch position.

Do NOT over-stretch, just feel the beginning of the stretch. Once you feel the stretch has eased come out of the position the way you went in.

Reverse the directions and do the same with the opposite side. This only needs to be done once a day to maintain flexibility, but you can do it more than once if you feel you need to.

A healthy back is a flexible back, so stay loose.

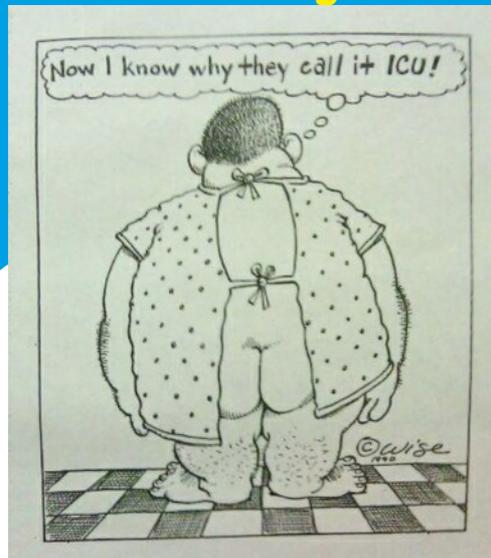


## BRAIN TEASER OF THE MONTH

Imagine you have 12 marbles and 3 identical bags. There are 3 creative ways to place the 12 marbles in the 3 bags whereby each bag contains the same number of marbles.

One way would be to put 4 marbles in each bag. Can you find the other 2 ways?

## Have a laugh



## Tip of the month

Preventing aches and pains comes down to a few basic rules:

- Don't remain stationary for long periods, e.g. sitting/standing
- Don't repeat the same movements over and over without stretching in the opposite directions
- Stretch daily in all direction in all parts of the body
- Drink water, at least 2 to 3 litres of filtered water a day
- Don't over-exercise, stick to no more than 3 sessions a week

## Healthy living column

Most people think that they have to do high intensity workouts to benefit from exercising, but that's not true!

When it comes fitness, it's important to have the right mindset and a thorough understanding of what it takes to maintain a healthy lifestyle without relying on a strict program or an intense training style to achieve your goals. Unless you're training for an iron-man, a marathon, or a fitness competition of some sort, focus your mindset on consistency over intensity.

Walking can help in the following ways:

- Maintains a healthy weight
- Prevents or manages various conditions, including heart disease, high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes
- Strengthens your bones and muscles
- Improves your mood
- Improves your balance and coordination

Ensure you take long strides when walking and use this to control your pace and most of all ENJOY it!