

# NERANG PHYSIOTHERAPY



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The *difference* is obvious

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## Chairs and your back

Chairs are one of the major causes of lower back pain in the western world.

In Africa and the East where squatting or sitting on the floor or kneeling is utilised the occurrence of lower back pain is minimal.

Sitting is half way between standing and squatting and only utilises half of the natural range of motion we have in the lumbar spine.

Sitting with a lumbar 'support' pushes the spine into an unnatural posture as our spine is not meant to be in extension when sitting.

So why do we get relief from pain with a lumbar 'support'? Because it relieves the tension on the lumbar spine, unfortunately it does so by moving us further into the deformity!

This means in the short-term there is relief, but in the long-term tension increases even further and even the lumbar 'support' will not be enough to relieve the pain.

Once again a device is being used to treat a symptom not a cause. At best they should be used short-term while the true cause of the pain is being treated.



## Calf tears

Tearing a calf muscle can sound like a gun shot going off. The tendons of the large calf muscles are very tough as they have to take the entire weight of the body through them regularly, not to mention when playing sport.

Because of this toughness when they get put under unusual stress and tension they will eventually tear and it can be very sudden as in a game of tennis and the snap will be very loud. But why do they tear?

In most cases the calf muscle covering, called fascia, is in an abnormally tight condition commonly due to overuse. The overuse pattern is directly linked to the hip muscles being weak which means the weight taken through these muscles is not taken up sufficiently by the muscles.

This results in a form of a limp which means when you stand on the affected leg you actually spend a split second more on

that leg which means the weight put through that leg is more than normal. This means you have to push off that weight using the thigh muscles and the calf muscles.

This extra effort slowly causes a tightening of the fascia of these muscles resulting in stiffness. This now means the fascia has less play and is vulnerable to tearing.

So next time the calf muscles are pushed to their limit, which is now less than normal, they are susceptible to tearing. A lot of the time it is the fascia that tears, not the muscles. Now fascia can withstand up to 200 Lbs per square inch of strain, so it is naturally very tough, but that is only when it has its natural flexibility.

Remove the flexibility and this limits the ability of the fascia to absorb strain and a tear is imminent. So to prevent this occurring, we need to ensure normal hip muscle function and flexibility in the calf fascia.

## News

Well it's that time of the year again where we celebrate Christmas, relax with family and friends and eat too much, but enjoy it anyway. We would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

## EXERCISE OF THE MONTH:

Knee exercises  
Sitting self-biofeedback

This series of exercises will help anyone with knee pain or rehabilitating from knee surgery or can be done prior to knee surgery.

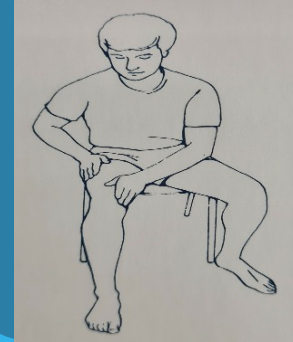
Self-testing can be useful to gauge your own muscle activity and compare between both sides. For this exercise, sit in a chair, place one hand on the thigh muscle just above the knee towards the inside of the thigh and the other hand on the thigh muscle just below the hip towards the outside of the thigh (see diagram).

Contract your thigh muscles till you feel the muscles under the lower hand tighten up nicely. Hold this for 7 seconds and then relax the muscles.

Do this 5 to 10 times on each leg.

The muscle under the lower hand will only activate in the last 3 degrees of knee extension so if it is not activating it means your knee joint is not straightening fully which can lead to stress on the knee joint.

If you are unable to straighten the knee this may indicate tension in the muscles at the back of the thigh or joint structure issues. See your Physio for an assessment.



## BRAIN TEASER OF THE MONTH

A couple enters a grand ballroom only to find the occupants are dead. There has been no crime committed. The couple is not concerned by what they have found. How is this possible?

Answer below.

## Have a laugh

A man walks into a pet store and asks for a dozen bees. The clerk carefully counts 13 bees out onto the counter.

"That's one too many!" says the customer. The clerk replies, "It's a freebie."



## Did you know?

Did you know fluoride was a neurotoxin?

Fluoride is a trace mineral that, in sufficient quantity, is harmful to mental health. Fluoride added to water and toothpaste is a public health measure thought to prevent dental decay and build healthy teeth. However, artificially adding fluoride to drinking water is a controversial practice.

Pubchem, a US National Institutes of Health's chemistry database, considers fluoride toxic and lists over 20 diseases and disorders associated with fluoride, including learning disabilities, memory disorders, and sleep disorders.

There's reason to doubt that fluoridated water prevents tooth decay since people in pro-fluoride countries don't have healthier teeth than the rest of the world. Many countries have actually experienced a substantial decline in cavities without the use of fluoride.

A neurotoxin is a substance that's poisonous or otherwise destructive to the tissues in the brain, spinal cord, and nervous system. A developmental neurotoxin is one that affects the brain during the most susceptible stages of life — before birth and during early childhood. A systematic review of studies published in The Lancet, one of the most prestigious medical journals, recommended that fluoride be classified as a developmental neurotoxin. This would put fluoride in the same category as lead, mercury, arsenic, PCBs, and toluene.

Please research further and make up your own mind about flouride.

## Tips of the month

*Those who have no time for healthy eating will sooner or later have to find the time for illness.*

*What most people don't realize is that food is not just calories: It's information. It actually contains messages that communicate to every cell in the body.*

*If you keep good food in your fridge, you will eat good food.*

They are scuba divers and they are exploring a wreck of a sunken cruise ship.

Answer: