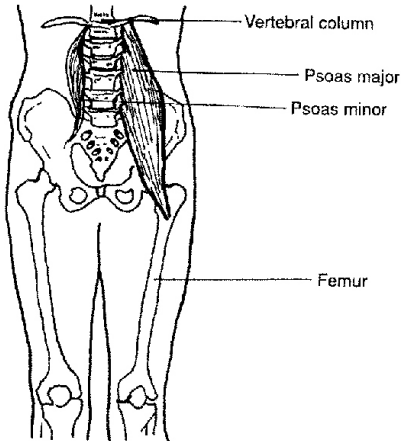


Neck, back and leg pain? Check out the Psoas!

You've probably never heard of the Psoas muscle but it could be the key to relieving leg, back and neck pain. Releasing the Psoas allows your body to comfortably stand upright and relax, relieving pain and tightness from your feet all the way up to your head.



Your Psoas runs from your low back to the inside of your upper thigh on the femur. It's the muscle that lifts your leg when you walk, run, and cycle. It also bends you forward towards your legs. If it's tight it will pull your legs up into the hip sockets at a slight rotation. It will also pull your back down and forward, compressing the joints and tilting the pelvis. You may walk with a bit of a stoop if your psoas is very tight. This will cause problems at your knees, feet, shoulders and neck.

Many knee problems that aren't caused by an accident are often the result of a chronically tight Psoas muscle. That's because, when the Psoas is tight, it will rotate the femur and twist the knee joint. The knee joint doesn't really like this!

If your Psoas is so tight that it bends you forward, then your shoulders will also be pulled down and in. This can cause anything from sore upper back muscles, to bursitis and fixed joints. The shoulder pull will also affect your neck, bringing it down and forward.

Of course sitting all the time doesn't help with psoas tightness either. Your whole pelvis will tilt and put extra stress on your spine which you will feel in our neck and low back. This chronic pelvis tilt will cause tight hamstrings, which you'll never seem to be able to stretch sufficiently.

So what can you do?

At home, you can use a spikey massage ball to release your psoas.

- Start with your right psoas.
- Hold the spikey ball against your abdomen a little below the level of your appendix on the inside of your pelvic bone.
- Lie face down on the floor with the ball in that position.
- Prop yourself up on your elbows.
You should notice the spot on your abdomen becoming a little sore.
- Hold the position for 40 seconds.
- You can slide the ball up or down a fraction if there are other sore spots.
- Don't hold for longer than 40 seconds or you might bruise yourself.

Do the same on your other side. Stand up and feel that sense of release as you stand more erect.

What else can you do?

Your massage therapist or chiropractor can release the Psoas in the clinic. Pilates can help with effective ways of working on the Psoas.

Remember that successfully decreasing pain and stiffness relies on treating the cause, not just the symptoms.

From an original article by Beth Sabo Novik