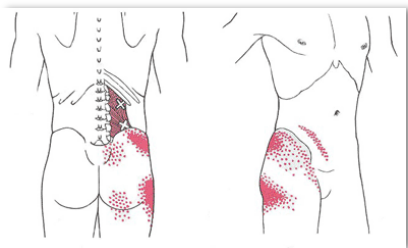


Stretching the Quadratus Lumborum

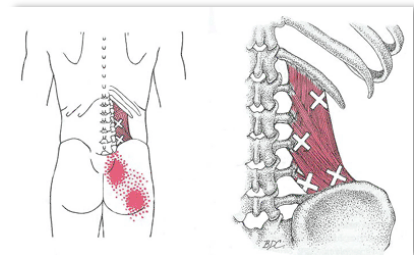
The QL attaches to your 12th rib, your lumbar spine and your pelvis.

The stress of golfing and running, as well as twisting motions, can overload this low back muscle. Long distance driving and aeroplane rides can create stored tension causing stiffness and pain. Coughing or sneezing will sometimes create sudden spasms in this already tight area making it painfully difficult to bend forward at the waist.

The QL can develop trigger points for many reasons and these will contribute to unequal tension in the spine, especially in the rib cage area and in the pelvis.



In the diagrams, X marks the spots where trigger points are normally. The shaded areas are where the pain is felt.



Trigger point release

Have a look at [the massage ball releases](#) download.

- Find your bottom rib and place the ball just beneath it.
- Roll the ball in very small movements over this area until you find an area of tenderness.
- With a small circular motion roll this area, exerting enough pressure to feel a tolerable amount of pain, perhaps a 7 or 8 on a scale of 1-10.
- Try different directions -pushing down and in; then at 45° upwards and in. Continue for about 1-2 min, 6-12 times a day.

Stretch

There are a number of ways to stretch this muscle. Here is one way that seems to work well for most people.

- Kneel on the floor with your buttocks on your heels. If you can't reach, then get as close as you can.
- Bend forward with your arms outstretched bringing your chest to your thighs and continuing to keep the connection between your heels and buttocks.
- Reach your arms over to a 10 o'clock position so that your body is in a "C" curve to the left. Hold this position for at least 60s before repeating to the other side in a 2 o'clock position. The affected side will be stretched by reaching your arms to the opposite side. ie to stretch the right QL, reach your arms off to the left.



Have a look at this video from "Crossfit Birmingham" to get an idea of how the stretch is done.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t_BFiQJvLVs