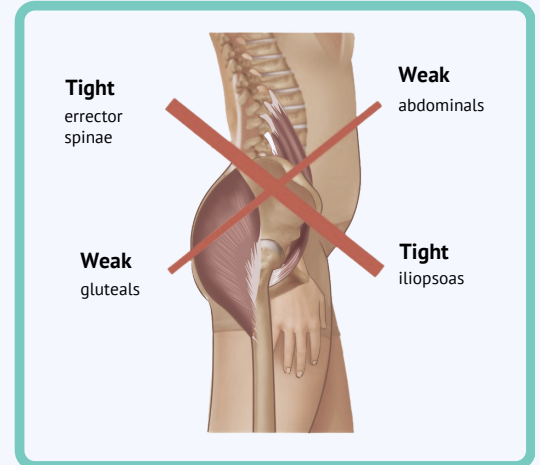


LOWER CROSSED SYNDROME

Your posture plays an important role in your overall health. Poor posture leads to chronic strain and discomfort. *Lower crossed syndrome* is a postural imbalance resulting from excessive tightness in your lower back and hip flexor muscles and weakness in your abdominal and buttock muscles.

Patients with lower crossed syndrome often have a *swayback*. Patients who sit for prolonged periods are at greater risk of lower crossed syndrome. This postural problem commonly leads to painful conditions involving the back or hips.



FIXING LOWER CROSSED SYNDROME

Correction of lower crossed syndrome is accomplished by stretching the tight muscles, strengthening weak muscles, modifying your workstation, and choosing the correct footwear.



Workstation Ergonomics

- Monitors should be at eye level with the top line of type 15 degrees below.
- Keep shoulders relaxed and elbows bent at 90 degrees.
- Periodically do the "Brugger relief position": sit at the edge of a chair, feet out, weight on legs, abdomen relaxed. Tilt pelvis forward, lift sternum, arch back, drop arms, roll out palms, and squeeze shoulders, and take deep breaths.



Footwear

- Choose shoes with good arch support.
- Avoid going barefoot or wearing shoes that lack support (i.e. flip-flops).
- Avoid high-heeled shoes or boots
- Consider adding arch supports or orthotics.

HOME EXERCISES

Hamstring Doorway Stretch



Lie flat on your back with your leg elevated and positioned in a doorway as shown. "Scoot" toward the doorframe until your hamstring is taut. Contract your hamstring by attempting to push your heel into the doorframe for seven seconds. Relax and gently slide your buttocks toward the doorframe while keeping your knees straight to increase the stretch. Repeat three contract/relax cycles on each side, twice per day or as directed. Alternately, you may provide your own resistance by looping a belt or towel around your heel instead of using a doorframe.

Psoas Stretch - Kneeling



Begin in a half-kneeling position with the side to be stretched on the floor and your opposite knee bent at 90 degrees, foot planted on the floor. Shift your pelvis forward slowly, keeping your hips and back straight. Against the resistance of the floor, contract your involved thigh in an attempt to flex it forward toward your chest for seven seconds. Relax and shift your pelvis further forward to increase the stretch. Keep your trailing leg rotated outward. "Lock in" to each new position and perform three contract/relax cycles twice per day or as directed. For a more intense stretch, lean your upper body away from the side being stretched.

Standing ITB/TFL Stretch



Stand approximately two feet from a wall with your affected hip facing the wall. Move your opposite leg forward so that your legs are in a scissors position. The outsides of your feet should be facing each other. Most of your weight should be on your straightened rear leg with your front knee slightly bent and relaxed. With your trunk upright, rotate your pelvis away from the wall and drop your buttock towards the wall until you feel a stretch. Be sure to keep your pelvis forward, not allowing it to drop backward. Keep your breastbone over your uninvolvement hip throughout this stretch. Against the resistance of the floor, attempt to contract your rear leg away from your body (toward the wall) for seven seconds. Relax and drop into this stretch to increase the pull. "Lock in" to this new position and repeat three contract/relax cycles on each side twice per day or as directed.

Side Bridge



Begin lying on your side. Rest your weight on your forearm and feet. Lift your hips toward the ceiling until your body is in a straight "plank" position. Try to avoid looking down to watch your body as this will interfere with achieving the ideal plank position. You may wish to use a mirror to ensure good form. Slowly lower your hips back to the floor and repeat as directed.

Semi-Stiff Dead Lift



Begin standing with your thumbs on your rib cage and your fingers on the crests of your hip, making sure not to approximate your fingers throughout the exercise. Stand on one leg with your knee bent only slightly. Slowly flex forward from the hips moving your chest toward the floor, making certain not to flex your back. Return to an upright position. Perform as directed.

Posterior Lunge



Begin standing on one leg and grasp the edge of a sink or a post for stability. Slowly bend your knee to lower your hips toward the floor as though you are going to sit in a chair. Keep your knee positioned directly above your ankle and do not allow it to shift forward. Try not to allow your back leg to touch the ground. Consciously contract your gluteal muscle on the planted leg side to return to the start position. Perform as directed.

**Do not begin any exercises without consulting your chiropractor or therapist. Exercises should be performed slowly and within a relatively comfortable range. Maintain good posture and breathe naturally. Do not hold your breath. Unless otherwise instructed, stop any exercises that cause pain, or radiating symptoms.*