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*"treating the cause of your problem, not just the symptoms"*

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## Want a Better Butt?

There are many people who would like to have a more firm and muscular "butt". Fitness magazines encourage you to have firm buttock muscles for aesthetic purposes; however, strong hip and upper leg muscles are a very good thing to have for other reasons as well. They are very important for walking, climbing steep hills, and lifting objects from the ground level. Whether you wish to improve the physical shape of your buttocks for social reasons or you would like to be able to lift better and safer, there are exercises that can help.

If done properly, the following exercise is very good for increasing the strength and shapeliness of the gluteal and quadricep muscles. The quadriceps makes up most of the muscles at the front of your thigh. These are the muscles you use to straighten your knee from a bent position. The gluteals make up most of the muscles in your buttock and upper hip. They are responsible for taking your hips from a bent to a straight position, as in the standing up phase of doing a squat.

The "squat" exercise is widely used by weightlifters and most athletes. It is also very good for non-athletes if it is done properly. It can even be done at home.

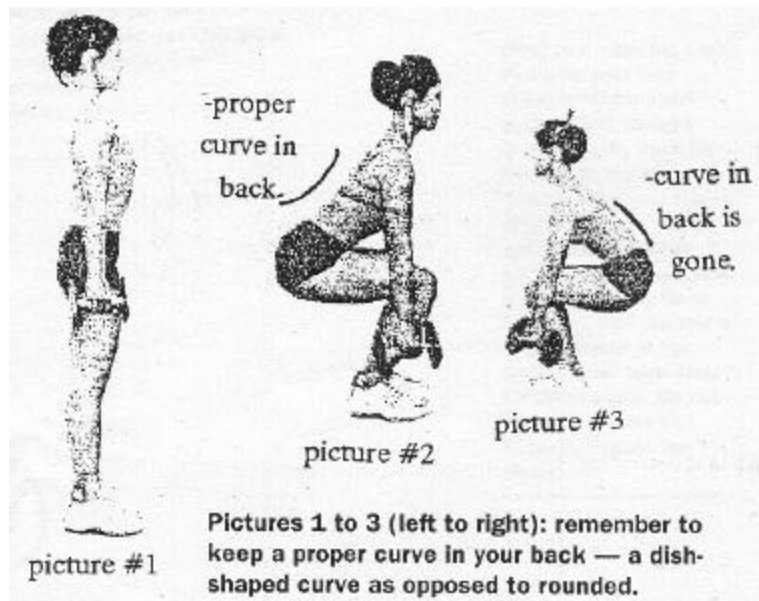
\*First of all, stand with your feet slightly more than hip-width apart, toes out slightly, knees aligned over top of your feet. For more resistance, you can hold small weights in your hands at your sides (see picture #1).

\*Keeping your pelvis in a neutral position, push your chest forward and make a small dish-shaped concave curve in your lower back.

\*Maintaining this posture, look straight ahead and lower your body as if sitting back into a chair. Keep your heels on the floor and pressure on your feet evenly distributed through your entire foot. Lower until your knees almost reach ninety degrees (see picture #2). Don't go below this level, as it is hard on your knees.

\*Drive back up to the starting position (picture #1) using your gluteal and quadricep muscles. Keep your heels on the floor the entire time.

\*Slowly but repetitively do this motion until your legs and hips become fatigued. If you are holding weights in your hands as well, use a weight that will still allow you to do 12-15 repetitions. Repeat this entire process two or three times.



Now that you know how to do it, let's discuss how not to do it.

- \*Don't let your knees roll inward or bow outward, as it is hard on your knees.
- \*Don't round or lose the dish-shaped curve in your back, as it puts you at risk of injuring your low back (see picture #3).
- \*Don't squat lower than when your knees are at ninety degrees, as it is hard on your knees.

For further explanation, contact me at my office or ask your certified personal trainer.