

Dr. Colin Gage

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

Treating a pain in the butt

Two weeks ago, I discussed one of the more common causes of dull/achy hip and buttock pain (piriformis syndrome). In that article I mentioned that I would discuss the treatment of this problem in the following week's article. I apologize, as that did not happen. However, I will discuss it this week!

If you missed that article, it is called "Do You Have a Pain in the Butt?", and is available on my website www.merrittchiro.com under the "weekly articles" section. Today, I will explain how this problem is conservatively treated in my office without the use of medications.

Once an accurate diagnosis of "Piriformis Syndrome" is made, the first step is to alleviate the spasm of the muscles (piriformis muscle) deep in the buttock region. This can be done by using specific deep pressure or massage of the muscle itself. To do this correctly, you must have a good knowledge of the anatomy of the region. In my office, I also use a mild electrical stimulation modality called "Interferential Current" to assist further in loosening the tight muscles. Of equal importance is how well the hip, low back, and pelvic joints are functioning. If there is a restricted range of motion or mobility of any of these joints, the adjacent muscles will have to compensate by working harder as you do your daily activities. This causes chronic muscle spasm and fatigue of the hip and low back muscles, eventually leading to the problem we are discussing. The most successful and safest way to restore the movement or range of motion to the joints I have described is through chiropractic manipulation. Depending on the size and age of the person, it can be done very gently or even firmly if necessary. To loosen the muscles, such as the piriformis muscle, I use "trigger point therapy" (deep pressure to release the muscle tension) and have the person perform specific stretches at home.

When the muscle spasm is relieved and the joints are functioning normally, your body is then able to heal itself. Incorporating regular moderate exercise in your daily activities will also help speed along your recovery by keeping the muscles loose and the joints mobile. As I have stated before, only your body can heal itself and health care practitioners should be there to only help it along.

Finally, if there are activities that your are doing at home or at work that are you think may be aggravating the hip or buttock, discuss with your chiropractor how these things can be changed so they have less of a negative effect.