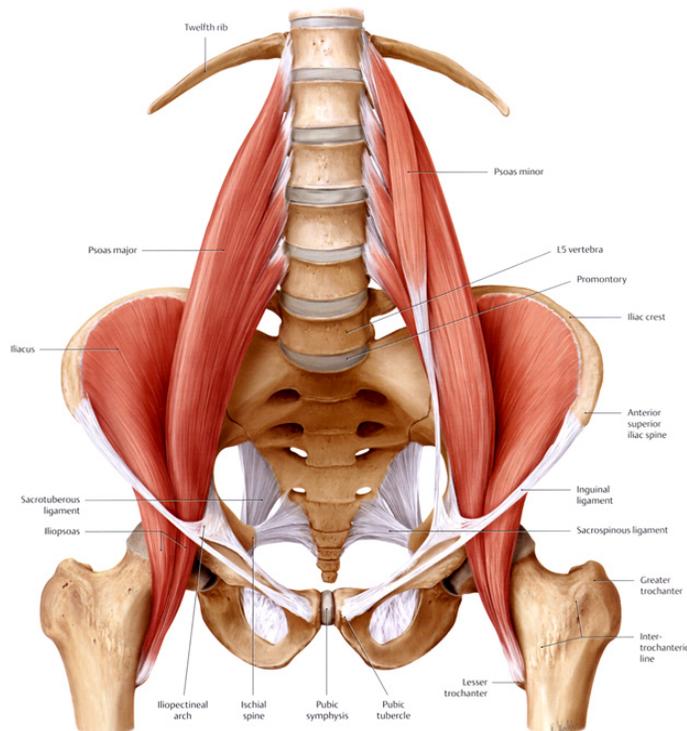


Know Your Psoas

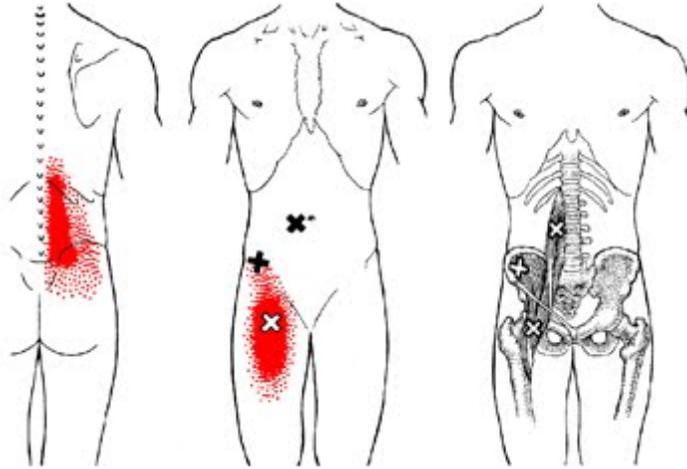
by Regina Ann

Recently I was treated to an article about the Psoas Muscle. I was unfamiliar with this core muscle and the more I read, the more I wanted to learn. The Psoas (pronounced so-as) is a vital key to our health and well being and as such, I now share what I have learned with you.

The Psoas muscle is the deepest muscle of the human body. It grows out of both sides of the spine spanning laterally from the 12th thoracic vertebrae (T12) to each of the five lumbar vertebrae. From there it reaches down through the abdominal core and the pelvis to attach to the top of the femur (thigh bone).



The Psoas is the only muscle to connect the spine to the legs. It is responsible for holding us upright and allows us to lift our legs. A healthy psoas muscle stabilizes the spine and provides support through the trunk. An unhealthy psoas can result in such symptoms as: low back pain, sacroiliac pain, sciatica, scoliosis, hip degeneration, knee pain, menstruation pain, infertility, digestive problems, pelvic tilt, and leg length discrepancies among others.



Most of us live a majority of our daily life from the place of our sympathetic nervous system (the system of action). This fact combined with daily emotional, mental, physical and environmental stress may trigger the psoas muscle to stay in constant fight or flight mode causing it to continually remain contracted, rigid, tight. This continual contraction can lead to shortening or distortion of the muscle resulting in a host of painful symptoms. These symptoms can include not only structural problems but may also result in constriction of organs, pressure on nerves and interfere with the movements of fluids as well as impairing diaphragmatic breathing.

As you can see, the psoas muscle is vital to our health and well being. Therefore, it is important to restore and maintain a healthy psoas. In researching practices to restore and maintain a healthy psoas I was delighted to learn that several of the yoga movements I practice naturally do just that. There are common pilates stretches as well as conditioning training stretches that similarly stretch and condition the psoas. Being a visual learner I suggest going to YouTube and searching for Psoas Stretches (there are several). As with all things I recommend finding an option that you will enjoy as this will contribute greatly to your successful integration of the exercise into your daily habits.

Psoas Yoga Videos

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJuNXAZRnag>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMbVsZ9f3j0>

Psoas Stretch

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

~*~ *Regina Ann*
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