NERANG PHYSIOTHERAPY

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The difference is obvious

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June 2015

Calf Strain Culprit or victim?

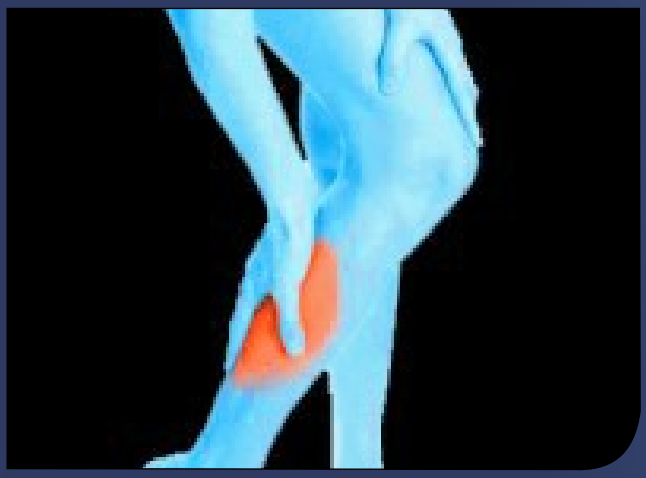
The first place many therapists look when someone complains of a calf strain is the calf. But what if the calf was merely a victim of circumstance and not the injury on its own?

It is very unlikely that a calf strain will happen as an isolated incident, i.e. the calf is the primary starting point of the injury. Calf strains are often an end result of a series of mechanical imbalances starting higher up the muscle chain.

Hip muscle weakness is commonly the pre-cursor to calf strain but often goes unnoticed. Weakness in the hips increases the load on the calf muscles to compensate for the lack of power in the hips.

This overuse results in the soft tissues around the calf muscles becoming tight and restricting the space in which the calf muscles can operate. This in turn causes weakness in the calf muscles.

Weakness and stiffness are a then an injury waiting to happen. So when treating the calf it is important to assess the strength and flexibility of the hip as well as the calf, otherwise the under-lying causative foundations will be left un-treated.



PRACTICE NEWS

Holidays are upon us and this is a good time to remind you of our special under 18 fees. Get your kids in for a checkup or a treatment while they are free and save time and money in the future.

STRETCH OR STRENGTHEN?

There exists a tendency in some schools of therapy to encourage strengthening of weakened muscles in order to normalise posture and functional problems as a priority, before attention is given to the short/tight muscles that act in opposition to the weak muscles.

This approach 'puts the cart before the horse'. In functional and painful problems, tight muscles are more often the culprit compared to weak muscles.

Tight muscles inhibit the function of their opposite muscles and thus weakness occurs in these muscles. Therefore it does not seem reasonable to start with strengthening of the weakened muscles, as most exercise programmes do.

It has been clinically proven that it is better to release tight muscles first. It is not exceptional, that after releasing the tight muscles, weakened antagonists (opposite muscles) improve spontaneously, sometimes immediately, sometimes within a few days, without any additional treatment.

This clinical observation which directs our attention and efforts towards the lengthening of tissues which have become short and tight, seems irrefutable.

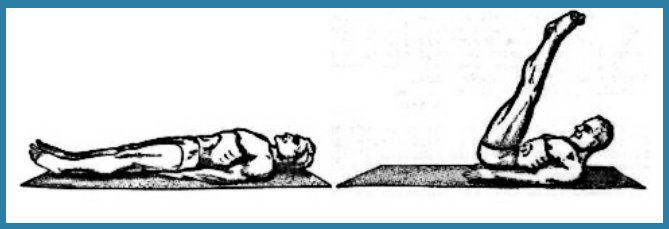
This is the approach we use at Nerang Physiotherapy where we have found that tightness of the soft tissues is one of the most common causes of muscle weakness.

The muscle that is tight could be weak or a muscle could be weak due to the tightness of the tissues in the opposite part of the body. For example if the lower back tissues are tight, the abdominal muscles will be weak.

So trying to strengthen the abdominal muscles (sit-ups) is NOT the way to go, but releasing the back tissues will almost automatically result in better tone of the abdominals.

EXERCISE OF THE MONTH:

TIBETAN NO. 2



Continuing with our Tibetan 5 exercises we come to number 2.

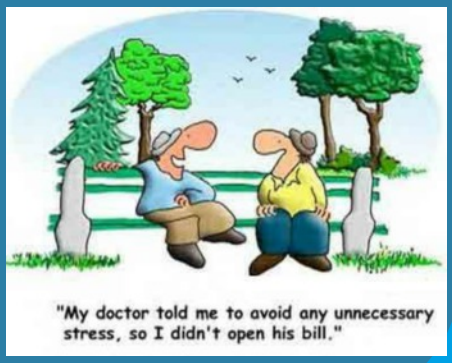
Lie on your back on a mat or a rug. Your legs are fully extended, ankles flexed and touching. Arms are by your sides with palms flat on the floor.

Inhale through the nose, lift your legs a little past a 90 degree angle (or as close as you can to it), and raise your head, tucking your chin into your chest.

Exhale through your mouth, bringing your legs and head down to the starting position - completely flat on the ground. Repeat the entire motion 21 times.

When you are finished, stand with your feet together and hands on hips. Take 2 full, deep breaths, inhaling through the nose and exhaling through the mouth with purses lips.

Have a laugh



BRAIN TEASER OF THE MONTH

The captain of a ship was telling this interesting story: "We travelled the sea far and wide.

At one time, two of my sailors were standing on opposite sides of the ship. One was looking west and the other one east.

And at the same time, they could see each other clearly."

MILK

Is it a source of calcium?

Contrary to popular beliefs milk as we know it, from cows, goats, sheep or even camels these days, is not a food and should preferably not be ingested as such.

Human beings are the only mammals on earth that once breast-feeding is finished we substitute it with another form of milk!

One main reason for having milk and milk products, we are told, is that it 'gives us a supply of calcium for stronger bones'. However, it is difficult for most of us to get the calcium as it is not readily available.

Calcium is normally bound to a phosphorous molecule in the cow's milk which also contains an enzyme to break this bond making calcium available.

Pasteurising milk kills the enzyme, leaving calcium still attached to the phosphorous molecule and unavailable for uptake.

Ironically enough the highest incidences of osteoporosis in the USA are found in the dairy-producing areas.

Makes you think, doesn't it?

Tip of the month:

A lot of people ask the question; "Should I change my pillow or mattress as I wake with pain in the morning?" Most of the time this is not necessary as early morning symptoms are usually a result of poorly sustained blood flow rate overnight, allowing tissues to tighten and pain to develop.

Instead of altering your pillow or mattress you would benefit more from an assessment of your blood flow rate. Changing pillow or mattress may help temporarily but it could be an expensive route and may not treat the causes. Call us now and wake up happy!

Answers:

The marines were standing back against the sides of the ship so they were looking at each other. It does not matter where the ship is (of course it does not apply to the North and South Pole).