

QUICK GUIDE TO YOUR HIPS

Hip issues are behind many common running injuries. Get to know yours and stay off the physio bench.

RUNNER'S
WORLD

By **Cindy Kuzma** Posted on February 26, 2016



Weakness or dysfunction in the structures of the hip can contribute to a wide range of running injuries, extending up into your lower back and as far down as your feet. Here's a quick anatomy lesson.

What's in a hip?

Pelvic bones

These anchor your core and upper leg muscles and should stay relatively level as you run. Often, though, runners' knees drift inward and the pelvis drops, causing the entire lower leg to rotate out of alignment.

Gluteus maximus

The strong, multilayered bum muscle absorbs impact and generates the force that helps propel you forward.

Gluteus medius

This is a primary stabilising muscle, which is key, given that running is, in a way, an everchanging one-legged balancing act.

Hip-related injuries

Lower back pain

The muscles above your hips get overworked trying to keep your pelvis stable if your glutes aren't up to the task.

Hip flexor strain

These muscles were designed to bend your hip – not to stabilise the pelvis. But when your glutes don't work properly, they often end up picking up the slack to reduce excessive motion in your pelvis.

Hamstring strains

Weak or inactive glutes often cause the hamstrings to work harder than they should, leading to overuse injuries.

ITB syndrome

A dropped pelvis and knees that rotate inward tend to strain the iliotibial band, causing pain and irritation.

Runner's knee

Weakness in the hip abductors and external rotators can alter your biomechanics, causing the knee to turn inward.

Achilles tendinitis

Weak or inactive glutes can also cause you to overuse your calf muscles to propel your body, which can strain your Achilles tendons.

Plantar fasciitis

If your hips are weak, calf muscles get overused. Under excess strain, they pull on the tissue (plantar fascia) that runs along the bottom of your feet.

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