



Sara Gordon & Associates

Physiotherapy Newsletter

Piriformis Syndrome

The piriformis muscle runs from under the sacrum to the outside of the hip, attaching to the thigh bone. The sciatic nerve runs from the spine, down the back of the thigh to the foot. Deep in the buttock it runs next to or through the piriformis muscle. If this muscle is in spasm, the result is irritation of the nerve and pain along its path. This is Sciatica which can also be caused by a prolapsed lumbar disc. A proper diagnosis is vital.

How does this occur?

- The pelvis may be out of alignment
- Gluteal (buttock) weakness
- Sudden increase in activity especially running downhill

What can I do?

- Rest
- Stretch piriformis
- Seek a diagnosis from your physiotherapist or your doctor.

What can physiotherapy do?

- Fully assess the problem to diagnose the cause of pain
- Trigger point massage and/or acupuncture
- Prescribe a programme of stretches and strengthening exercises to resolve the problem and prevent further episodes