

jazzercise®

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NEWSLETTER

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What the hips lack can hurt the Back

You've likely experienced it. Statistics tell us that 8.5 out of every 10 people will experience lower back pain during their adult life. And that lower back pain is the most common reason to visit the doctor behind the common cold.

Did you know that your hips could be the cause of lower back pain?

Although back pain is often the result of many things, one of the more common and more commonly overlooked causes is issues with your hips.

Generic back exercises are a dime a dozen. Visit any Web site or doctor's office and you will find a handout containing the same ten or so exercises. It's actually quite comical how a problem of epidemic proportions is often treated with the same simple exercises regardless of age, body type, diagnosis, size, etc. And these exercise handouts typically contain few movements, if any, that address the hips.

The hip joint is a ball-and-socket joint. A joint with this kind of design moves in many different ways. If you look at the design of the hip joint and compare it to the design of the vertebral joints of the lower back, you will see some very distinct differences. The vertebral joints of the lower back are not designed to move anything like the hip joints. In fact, the lumbar vertebral joints don't even move as well as the vertebral joints of the rest of the spine.



For the most part, the lower back likes to ride on top of the sacrum and pelvis and follow their direction. The motion of the pelvis and sacrum is actually a result of the movement of the hip joints (the pelvis along with the femur form the hip joint).

For example, when performing a twisting motion while standing during a Jazzercise routine, the majority of the rotational motion comes from the hip joints and the upper back. Very little comes from the lower back.

But what happens if you have to twist but the hips do not twist well? The body will transfer the responsibility to the lower back. Since we've already stated that the lower back doesn't rotate well, we are asking it to perform a function it is not prepared for. And this is where injury occurs.

The injury could happen abruptly with a sudden turn while holding something heavy in your hand. Or it could occur as a result of many repeated turns that exceed what your body can tolerate over time, resulting in pain.

It is important to note that twisting or rotating is not the only motion that poor hip function will transfer to the lower back. **Tight hip flexors will limit the ability to extend the hip.** For example, when walking or running, the thigh must move behind you as you stride forward with the other leg. If the leg cannot move behind you due to tightness in the front hip flexor, it will find that extra range of motion by increasing the arch in the lower back.

Another problem (more common in women than men) is **poor side-to-side stability of the hips** when load bearing on one leg. This is observable when the pelvis "hikes" up on the side of the stance leg due to weakness in the gluteus medius and minimus. This will cause increased lateral flexion of the lumbar spine.

Stability and mobility of the hips are important for good overall musculoskeletal function and a healthy lower back. It is helpful to realize that good functioning hips are key to both prevention and recovery of lower back pain.

Dates for your diary

Saturday 4th April: The Saturday class will move permanently from the Deaf Society to Mannofield Church. See calendar for map of new location.

First two weeks of April, School's Easter Holiday. All classes will continue to run as usual. See April Class Schedule.

May EFT Table> Find all your friendly tickets, b-day cards and rain checks and bring them to class to exchange for Jazzercise goodies, leggings and tops. For EFT students only.

Happy Easter Holiday!