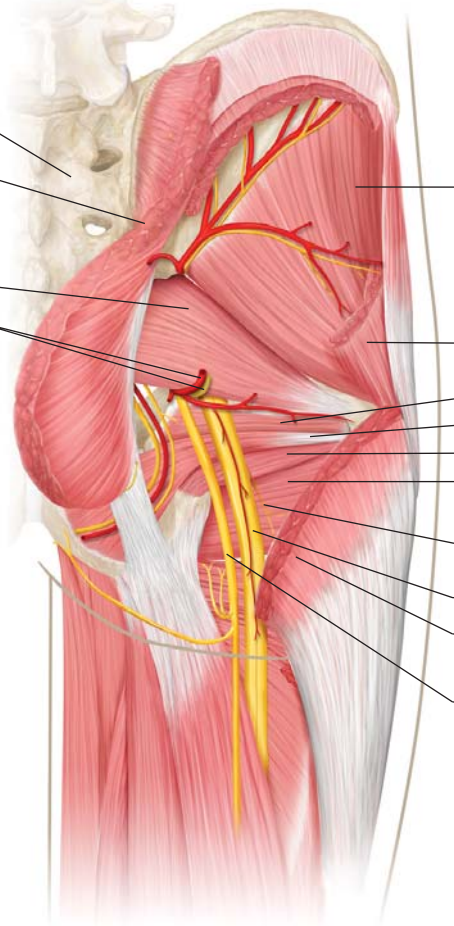
Piriformis Syndrome

Normal Hip and Thigh Anatomy: Posterior View



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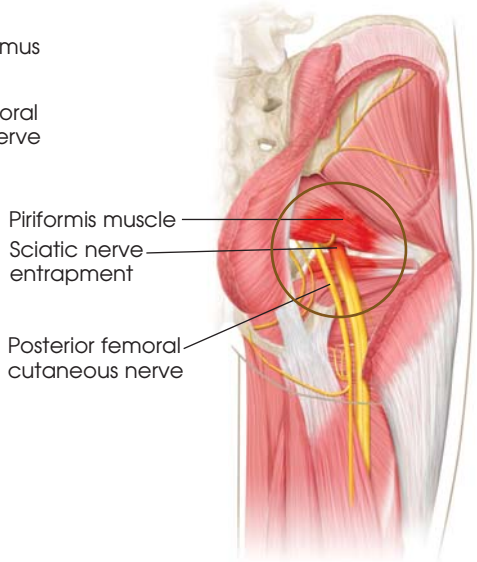

Piriformis Syndrome is a pinching and irritation of the sciatic nerve as it passes though or below the piriformis muscle, located within the buttocks/gluteal region. It is not known exactly how or why the piriformis muscle begins to irritate but some theorize it is caused by muscle spasm, fibrosis (formation of scar tissue) or injury. Symptoms include pain, tingling or numbness at the back of the hip and down the leg, which can worsen in situations that compress the sciatic nerves such as running or sitting positions.

Common Treatment Options

- Rest.
- Avoid the activities that trigger the pain.
- Take anti-inflammatory medicine as directed by your doctor.
- Stretch the piriformis muscle by crossing your legs and internally rotating the hip.
- Consider deep massage or physical therapy.
- The physician may recommend a corticosteroid injection near the irritation.
- Additional tests may need to be performed to rule out other causes of sciatica such as a disc herniation in the spine.
- Surgery to loosen or release the piriformis muscle tendon may be recommended if other treatment methods are not effective.

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Notes:

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