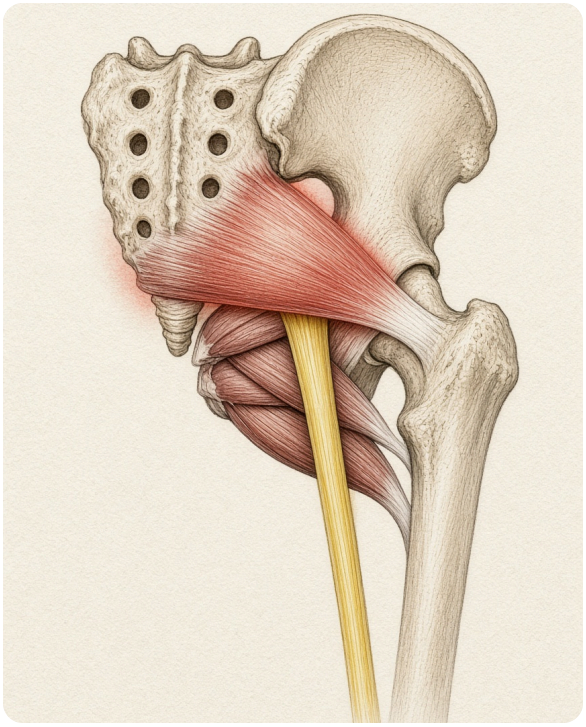
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PATIENT GUIDE

Piriformis Syndrome

Pain in your butt that shoots down your leg? It could be **piriformis syndrome.**

Armin Ghayyur
Physiotherapist · arminphysio.com

What is piriformis syndrome?

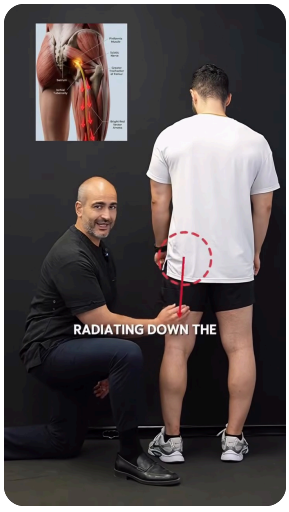
The piriformis is a muscle deep in your buttock. When it gets tight, irritated or overloaded, it can press on the nearby sciatic nerve and cause pain, tingling or numbness from the buttock down the back of the thigh. Not all leg pain comes from the piriformis. Your lower back or hip can cause similar symptoms.

QUICK CHECK

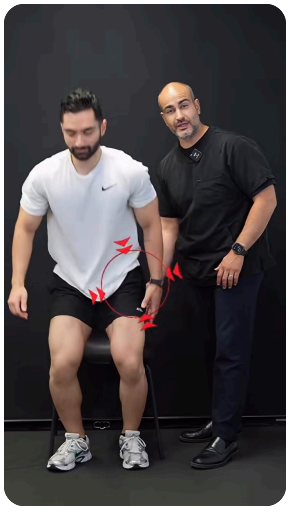
Does this sound like you?

- ☐ Pain in the **back of the hip**, **radiating down the leg**
- ☐ Pain in the back of the hip or down the leg **after being seated**
- ☐ Pain with **long periods of sitting, driving or climbing stairs**
- ☐ Pain when **running** or after lots of lower-body activity
- ☐ **Tenderness** deep in the buttock

If you ticked a few boxes, your piriformis could be part of the problem. Try the 3 exercises on the next pages.



Pain in the back of the hip, radiating down the leg



Pain in the back of the hip or leg after being seated

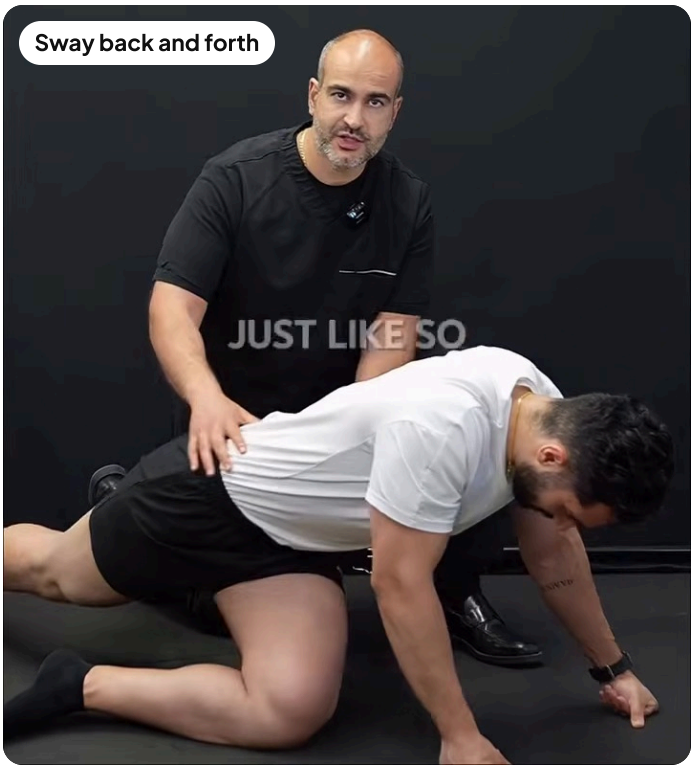
YOUR 3 EXERCISES

Try these exercises

1 Piriformis mobility: knee across

Works the mobility of the piriformis





1. Start on your **hands and knees**, as shown.
2. **Get the knee across the body**, just like so.
3. **Sway back and forth**, and repeat.

3 sets of 10–15 reps, hold each for 3–5 seconds

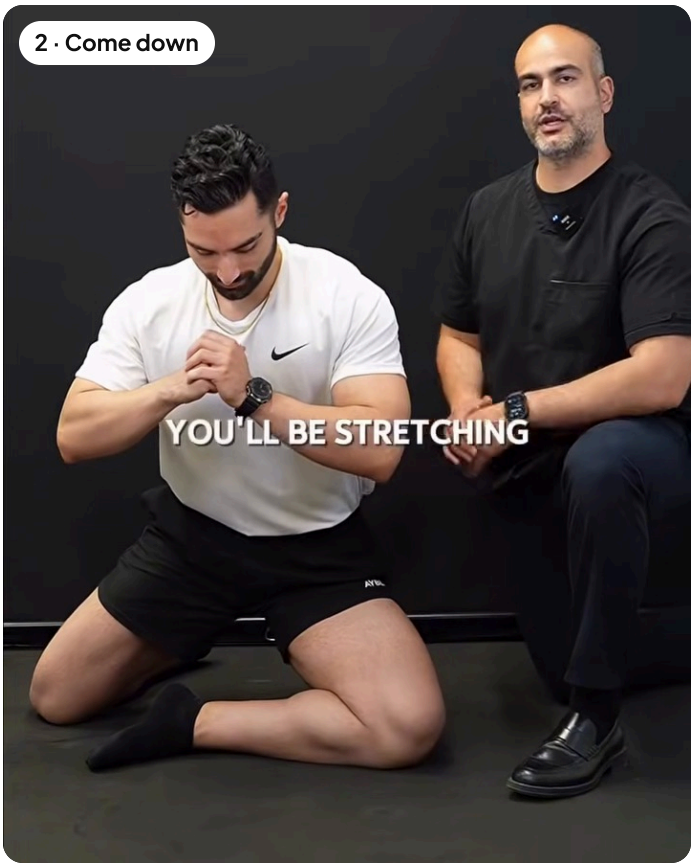
From Armin's video description

Stop if you feel sharp pain, or tingling or numbness down the leg that gets worse.

2 Kneeling stretch + strengthen

Stretches the piriformis on the way down, strengthens it on the way up





1. **Get into this position**: kneeling, with your affected leg bent in front of you.
2. **As you come down**, you'll be stretching out the piriformis.
3. **As you push up**, you'll be strengthening it.
4. Repeat.

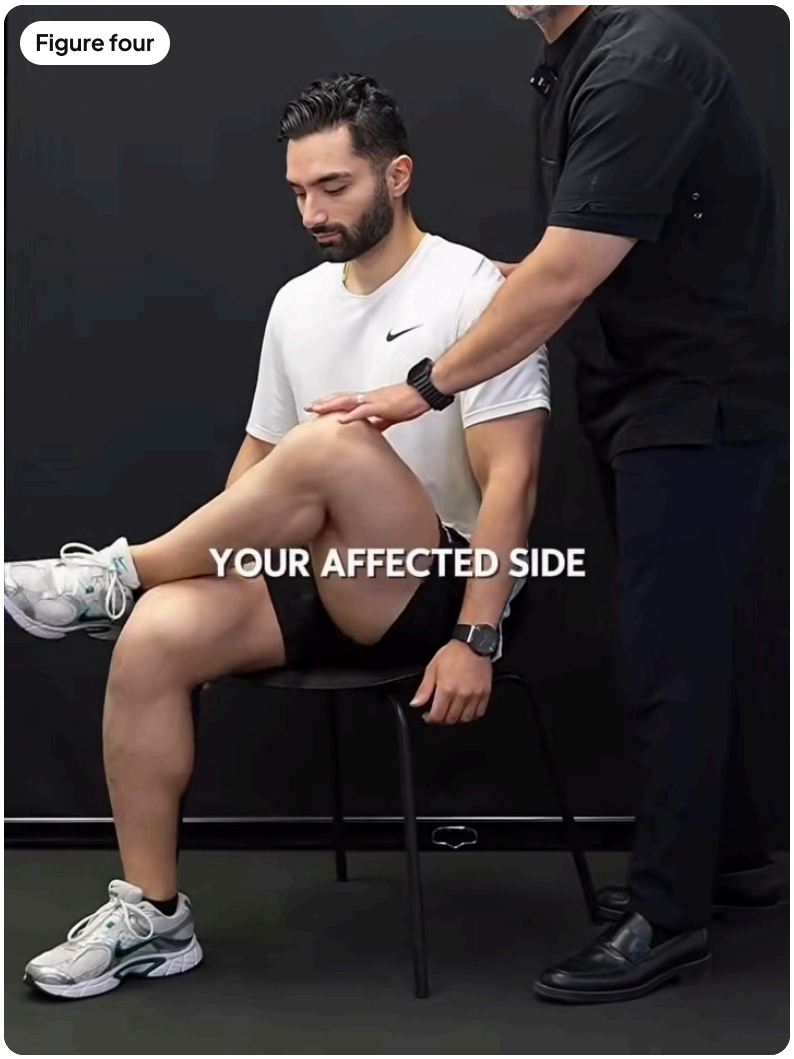
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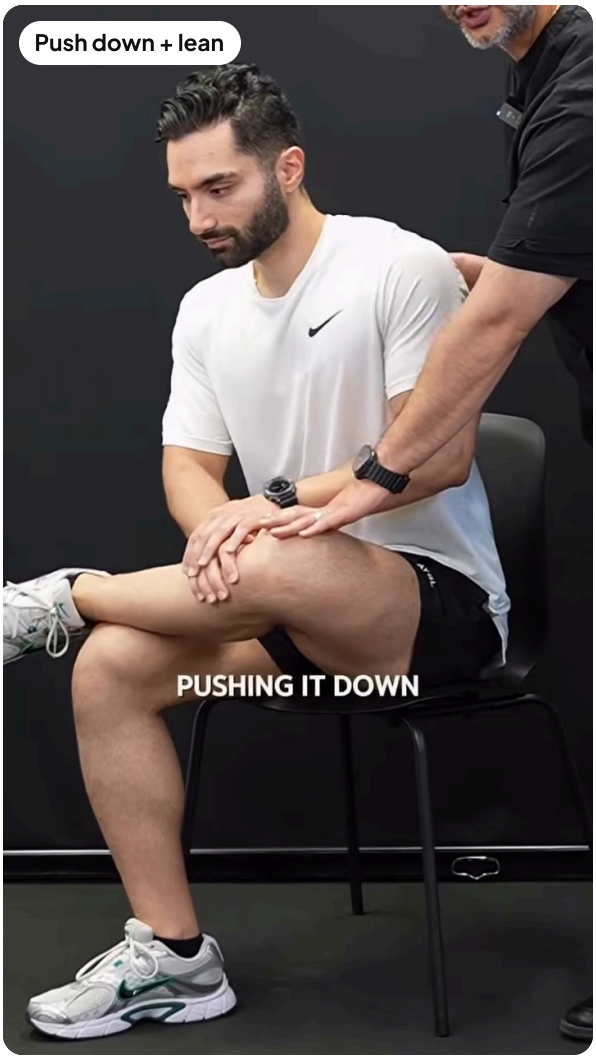
From Armin's video description

Stop if you feel sharp pain, or tingling or numbness down the leg that gets worse.

3 Seated figure-four stretch

A good stretch in the back of the hip





1. Sit and get into a **figure-four position**. Your affected side should be on top.
2. **Place your hand gently on it**, pushing it down. You should feel a good stretch in the back of the hip.
3. Keep your **back nice and straight**.
4. **Lean forward.** Hold it for **about 30 seconds** and repeat.

2–3 holds of about 30 seconds each side

Suggested dosing (30-second hold is from the video)

Stop if you feel sharp pain, or tingling or numbness down the leg that gets worse.

DAILY ROUTINE · ABOUT 10–15 MINUTES

Put it together

01
Mobilize
Knee across + sway, 3 sets of 10–15

02
Stretch + strengthen
Kneeling come down + push up, 3 sets of 10–15

03
Stretch
Seated figure four, 2–3 × 30-second holds

Sets, reps and holds are from Armin's video and description, except the number of figure-four holds and doing it once a day, which are suggestions. Move slowly and with control.

Stop the exercise if you notice

- Sharp or worsening pain
- Tingling, numbness or burning down the leg that gets worse
- Weakness in your leg or foot

If an exercise keeps causing these, stop it and get assessed.

SAFETY FIRST

Get checked right away if you have

- **Numbness in your groin, genitals or inner thighs** (the "saddle" area)
- New **trouble controlling your bladder or bowels**
- **Weakness in your leg or foot** that's getting worse, or your foot dragging
- Pain, numbness or tingling in **both legs**
- Pain after a **fall or accident**, or with **fever or unexplained weight loss**
- A calf that is **swollen, red, warm and painful**

Go to the nearest emergency department right away for these. If your pain hasn't improved after a few weeks, or keeps travelling further down your leg, **book an assessment**.

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Scan for @arminphysio

NEED MORE HELP?

Book an assessment with Armin

In clinic or virtually. See current options and times at the link.

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Disclaimer: This handout is for education only. It is not a diagnosis or medical advice and does not replace an assessment by a qualified health professional. If you're unsure whether these exercises are right for you, check with your physiotherapist or doctor first.

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