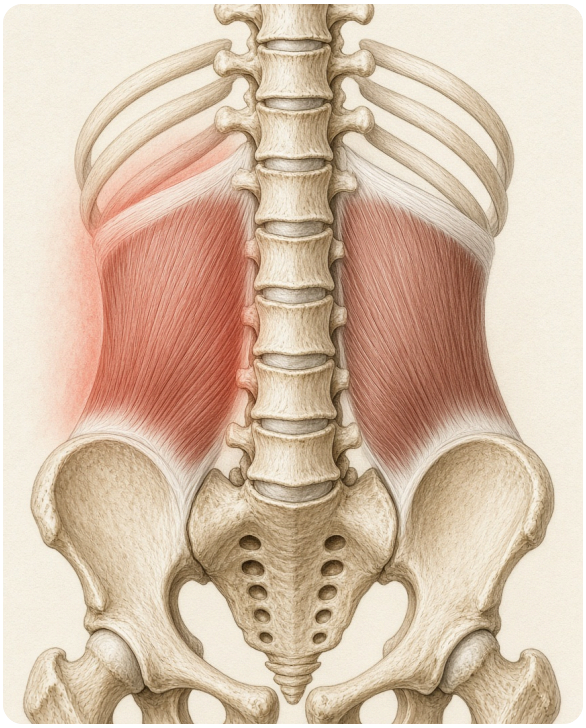
ARMIN PHYSIO



PATIENT GUIDE

QL Muscle Strain

Pain on one side of your lower back?
Your **QL** could be the problem.

Armin Ghayyur
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What is a QL strain?

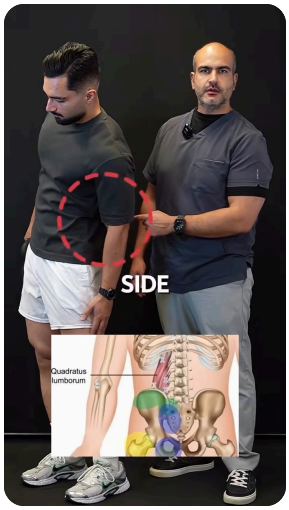
The quadratus lumborum (QL) is a deep muscle on each side of your lower back, running from the top of your pelvis to your lowest rib. It helps stabilize your spine and pelvis, and can get irritated or strained from heavy lifting, repetitive movements, sudden twisting or a jump in activity. Rehab focuses on restoring comfortable movement and gradually rebuilding strength and lifting tolerance.

QUICK CHECK

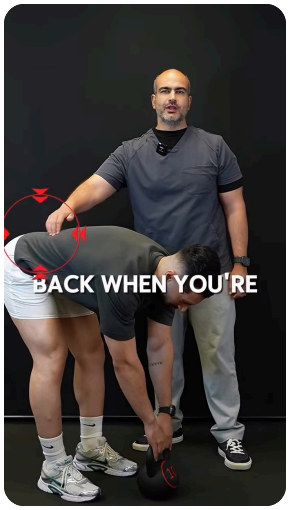
Does this sound like you?

- ☐ **One-sided** low back pain
- ☐ Pain when you're **bending to your side**
- ☐ Pain when you **rotate and side bend**
- ☐ Pain in the back when you're **lifting something**
- ☐ **Tenderness** along the side of the lower back

If you ticked a few boxes, your QL could be strained. Try the 2 exercises on the next pages.



Pain bending to your side



Pain when lifting something

YOUR 2 EXERCISES

Try these exercises

1 Standing QL stretch

Stretches the whole side of the low back





1. **Place your hands on a wall** or hold on to a door frame.
2. **Bring your left leg over** (cross it behind) just like so.
3. **Side bend away**, stretching out this whole region.
4. **Hold it for about 30 seconds** and repeat. Do both sides if needed.

Hold about 30 seconds, 2–3 times

Hold from Armin's video; repeats suggested

Stop if you feel sharp pain, pain that goes above about 4/10 or keeps building, or pain, numbness or tingling travelling into your leg.

2 Step hip hike

Strengthens the QL through a controlled hip drop and lift



1. **Stand on a step** and hold on to something for support.
2. **Gently drop this leg** like so.
3. **Bring it right back up**, hiking the hip.
4. **Go back down** and repeat.

3 sets of 10–15 reps, hold **3–5 s** where appropriate

From Armin's video description

Stop if you feel sharp pain, pain that goes above about 4/10 or keeps building, or pain, numbness or tingling travelling into your leg.

DAILY ROUTINE · ABOUT 5–10 MINUTES

Put it together

01
Stretch
Standing QL stretch, 30 s holds

02
Strengthen
Step hip hike, 3 × 10–15

The 30-second hold is from Armin's video and the 3 × 10–15 reps are from his description; repeats and doing it once a day are suggestions. Suggested: mild discomfort up to about **4/10** is OK. Don't push through significant pain.

Stop the exercise if you notice

- Sharp or catching pain in the side of your back
- Pain, numbness or tingling travelling into your leg
- Pain that lingers or is worse the next day

Challenge yourself without significantly increasing your pain (from Armin's description).

SAFETY FIRST

Get checked right away if you have

- **Numbness in the groin or saddle area**, or new **bladder or bowel** changes (trouble peeing, or losing control)
- Leg **weakness that is getting worse quickly**, foot drop, or symptoms in **both legs**
- Back pain after a **fall, accident or heavy impact**
- Back pain with **fever**, feeling unwell, or **unexplained weight loss**
- **Constant pain at night** that doesn't ease with rest or changing position
- A history of **cancer**, osteoporosis or long-term steroid use with new back pain

For numbness in the groin or saddle area, new bladder or bowel changes, or quickly worsening leg weakness, **go to the nearest emergency department right away**. For the others, see a doctor promptly. If your back isn't improving after a few weeks, **book an assessment**.

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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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