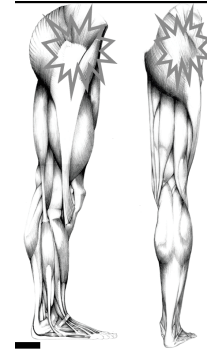


## GREATER TROCHANTERIC PAIN SYNDROME (GTPS) - Advice & Rehabilitation Leaflet

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### Patient information and rehabilitation leaflet - Greater Trochanteric Pain Syndrome (GTPS)

(Also known as Trochanteric Bursitis, Gluteus Medius  
Tendinopathy, Lateral hip pain ...)



This is a common condition causing pain over the outside / lateral aspect of the hip region, and that can spread to the buttock, or into the thigh. This can commonly cause pain lying on the affected side, or when sitting or standing.

This condition can be called different things by different practitioners, which can cause some confusion, although the consensus is now to call this “Greater Trochanteric Pain Syndrome” or “GTPS”. It is thought to occur at the site of the attachment of the gluteal muscles to the side of the hip region, and can often be associated with a swelling of the bursa there, hence one of the original names of “trochanteric bursitis” which is still in widespread use.

Trochanteric Pain is a condition that generally improves over time, although this can take 6-9 months, and many patients can have symptoms for much longer. A range of treatments can be used to reduce symptoms and hopefully speed up recovery. Unfortunately there is no single treatment that works for everyone, however prolonged immobility or rest can worsen the condition and therefore this should be treated actively, but still using common sense.

There are many different risk factors for the development of trochanteric pain, and whilst we can't do anything about some of the risk factors for this condition (such as age and genetic factors), it is important to reduce the ones that you can. These include measures such as losing weight, reducing or stopping smoking, controlling diabetes where appropriate, changing shoes, modifying activity and undertaking a specific rehabilitation programme as shown on the next few pages.

The following is a reminder of the exercise that you should have been shown. It is difficult to learn these exercises from a piece of paper; instead this is to help you remember what you have been shown already.

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The home exercise regime is broken down into the following sections:

1. Stretches of the surrounding area including the low back
2. Specific strengthening exercises for the muscles around the hip
3. Balance exercises to activate the muscles around the hip and low back

In addition to these rehabilitation exercises, it is important to progress back to regular physical activity to maximise health gains.

### 1. Stretches of the surrounding area

With all of the following stretches we normally recommend starting by holding the position for about 15 seconds, performing the stretch 3 times on each leg, and repeating these at least 3 times per day.

Each week increase the stretch by 5 seconds, until you are holding the stretch for 30 seconds each time. The exception is the cat stretch below which is discussed in that section.

#### i) Iliotibial Band (ITB) stretches

This stretch can be performed in either of two ways, so find the way that you prefer

1 – cross one leg behind the other, then slowly bend forwards as far as you are able to.

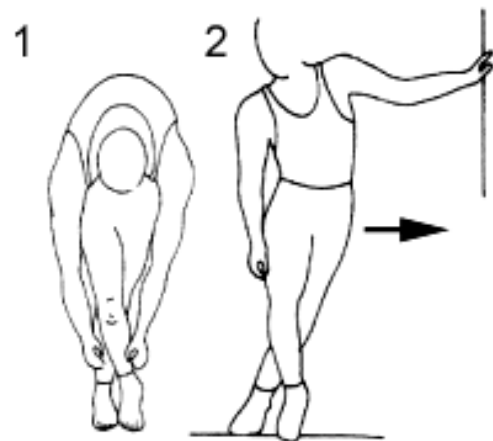
Hold this position for a few seconds, before returning to the upright position

You should feel a pull down the outer edge of your thigh

or

2 – standing near to a wall, cross one leg (the one nearest to the wall) behind the other one

Using the wall for support slowly push the hip that is nearest the wall towards the wall, you should feel a stretch into the side of your thigh



Repeat on the opposite side

#### ii) Piriformis stretches

Lying flat on your back, cross right leg over left leg at knee, reach through and clasp hands under left thigh, gently pull left leg towards chest & should feel a tightness in right buttock, hold this position then gently release.



Repeat on the opposite side

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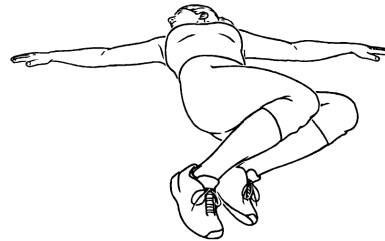
### iii) Prone lumbar extension

Lying flat on your tummy, bring your hands up under your shoulders like you are in a press-up position. Gently push your shoulders up off the floor leaving your hips on the floor into an extended lower back position. Hold this position, before gently returning to the starting position



### iv) Supine lumbar rotation

Lying flat on your back, bend your knees to about half way, keeping your knees together and your feet on the floor and with your arms outstretched to the side. Slowly twist to allow both knees to fall over to the right side as far as they will go. Hold this stretch, then slowly return to the neutral position, before slowly moving the knees over to the left and repeating this stretch on the opposite side



### v) Cat stretch

Kneeling on all fours, on a comfortable surface. Keep your arms straight throughout this exercise and your knees about hip width. Firstly raise your head and slowly push your tummy towards the floor arching your back downwards. Hold this position for a couple of seconds. Then slowly raise your tummy up, and continue through the neutral position to arch your back up towards the ceiling. Again hold this position for a couple of seconds, before returning to the neutral position. Repeat this stretch about 5 or 6 times in each direction



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### 2. Specific strengthening for the muscles around the hip

In addition to flexibility exercises, it is important to progress specific strengthening exercises for the muscles around the hip, in order to reduce your pain. There is some evidence that even if you have symptoms only on one side that these exercises should be done for both sides. We would normally ask you to do 3 sets of each of these exercises, once a day only – starting at a number of repetitions where you are starting to feel the load.

Each week you should increase the number that you are doing slightly. Each of these exercises should be done very slowly, as this is far better at building control of movement. However listen to your body throughout the rehabilitation period, and only progress as far and as fast as your symptoms allow.

#### i) Side-lying leg lift (straight knee)

Lie on your side on a supportive surface such as a bed or a rug

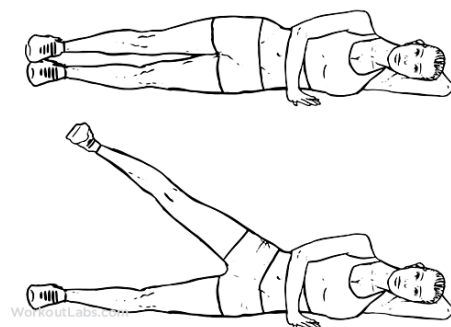
Keeping your leg straight, slowly raise the leg to the side

When you are as far as you can go, hold this position for a couple of seconds

Very slowly bring the top leg back down again

Repeat as directed

*If you are able to lie on your painful side, then repeat these exercises on both hips*



#### ii) Clam (bent knee)

Lie on your side on a supportive surface such as a bed or a rug

Bend both knees to about half-way, keeping your feet and knees together

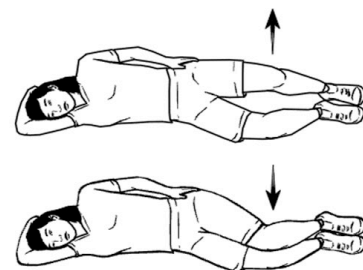
Keeping your feet together, raise the top knee very slowly up in the air as shown by the top picture to the right

Hold this position for a couple of seconds, then very slowly lower the leg again under control

Throughout this exercise the back should stay still, i.e. the movement happens at the hip, rather than rolling the back

Repeat as directed

*If you are able to lie on your painful side, then repeat these exercises on both hips*



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### iii) Hip extension

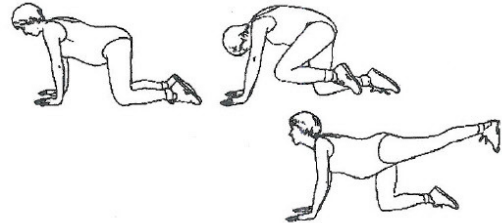
Knee on all-fours on a supportive surface such as a bed or a rug

Slowly bring one knee off the floor bringing the knee slightly towards your chest

Extend the leg behind you, until the leg is completely straight as displayed in the lower picture to the right. Hold this position for a couple of seconds, then slowly return the knee to the starting position.

Repeat on both sides as directed.

Normally we would expect you to find one side easier than the other with this exercise, although it helps to perform the exercise on both sides.



### 3. Balance exercise (proprioception) – *be careful not to fall & injure yourself with this exercise*

This last set of exercises seeks to improve balance and coordination, to better activate the muscles around the hip and low back.

Start to practice by standing on one leg on a firm, flat surface with your eyes open.

It is ok to hold onto something stable like a worktop if you need to when starting out. Then gradually progress from holding onto something, to touching a worktop lightly, to intermittently touching & then not touching at all. When you are doing this make sure that the hip does not “drop” and maintain good posture.

Look to stand on either leg for about 30 seconds in total x 3 each leg – at least 3 times per day.

When you are getting good at these exercises, then to progress this further place a pillow under your standing foot (or wobble board) and gradually build up the time you are balancing for.

When you are getting very good, try standing on one leg on a firm surface, but this time with your eyes closed – this makes the exercise harder as you no longer have your eyes giving you clues about your wobbling.

