

## LOWER BACK PAIN PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

by Kate Montgomery

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At one time or another, you probably have strained or even injured your lower back. You most likely stopped doing what caused the injury, took an anti-inflammatory (such as IBpropin) and a muscle relaxer prescribed by a physician, ice the area and lied down to rest. Hours later, stiff and sore, you may have felt a little better. But in the following weeks and months as the pain recurs, you wonder if your life has changed forever.

Lower-back pain can be one of the most debilitating and stressful ailments you'll suffer. The good news is you don't have to fall victim to it, and there is a solution for it!

As a Massage Therapist, I would like to share my solution for lower-back pain. Over and above structural misalignment, it is the posture muscles that cause lower-back pain. These muscles, the quadratus lumborum (the primary back posture muscle) and the iliopsoas (the front posture muscle) lie deep, next to the spine and support the body as you stand.

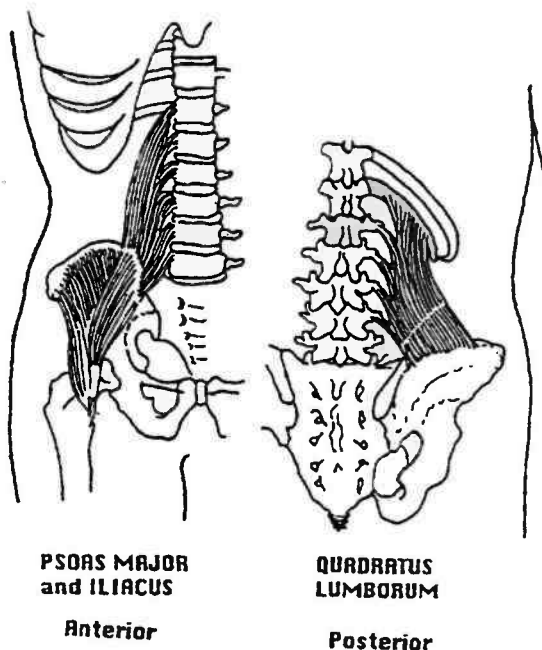


Figure 1.

Certain movements, such as lifting objects incorrectly, repetitive twisting motions (such as when playing golf), constantly carrying a heavy object primarily on one side (such as a child or backpack) or lack of exercise to strengthen the muscles or emotional trauma can cause the back posture muscle to go into spasm and tighten up. That can cause trigger points, hypersensitive areas, to develop along the spine (note x's on the illustration), which do not allow the muscle to lengthen and relax. You can determine where your trigger points are because they will be painful to the touch.

When people let chronic back pain persist for months or years, structural misalignment can occur. A chiropractor should be sought to correct the situation. A chiropractor versed in applied kinesiology and cranial therapy. When realigning the body, the skeletal, muscular and nervous systems need to be done at the same time to insure overall healing and balance within the body.

But, if you take care of the spasm immediately by releasing trigger points, the muscle fibers lengthen and the pain recedes as the muscle relaxes. And structural problems may not result. (Remember, every situation is different, so listen to your body.)

By following a few simple and easy steps, daily, you can prevent chronic back pain.

Here are steps to identify your trigger points and relieve yourself of lower-back pain.

### The Low-Back Ritual

- Identify the muscular imbalance.  
(Therapist assessment)

#### Muscle test:

- Quadratus Lumborum
- Iliopsoas
- Piriformis
- Sacral alignment
- Trigger point assessment

**Self-Correction:**

- **Release trigger points in the quadratus lumborum muscle.** Standing, find the end of the lower rib cage in the back. Place your thumbs under the last rib and press into the spine. If there is soreness or pain, this is a trigger point. Work your way down, pressing into the spine, until you reach the top of the hip.

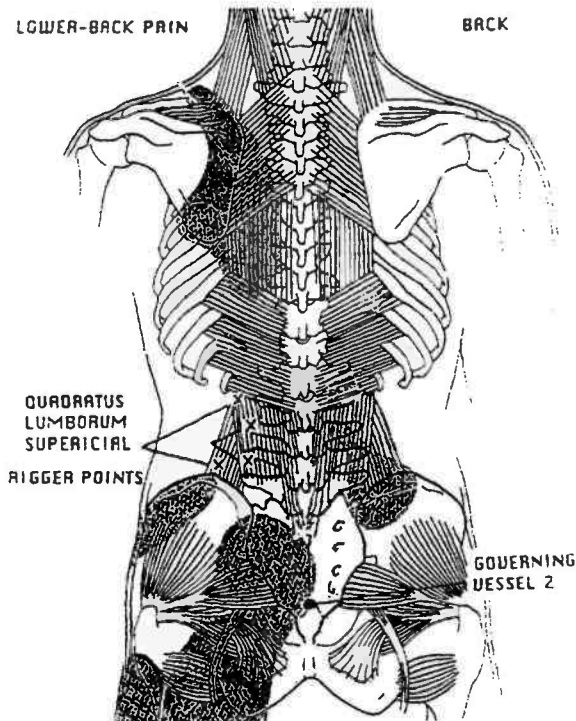


Figure 2. (note x's on illustration)

- Hold each point for at least 90 seconds or until the pain subsides.
- After releasing all the trigger points, self-stretch - perform side-bends to stretch the low-back muscle. Do them slowly and do not bounce.

- **Release trigger points in the iliopsoas muscle.** Lying down, face-up, knees bent, feet flat on the floor. Apply pressure to the belly of the iliopsoas muscle. If it is painful that is a trigger point. It may also feel tight. Hold pressure as you raise your leg up and down. Do this until the trigger point releases. Repeat and do the opposite side. Self-stretch by hanging leg over bed or table or standing and leaning slightly backwards with leg extended.

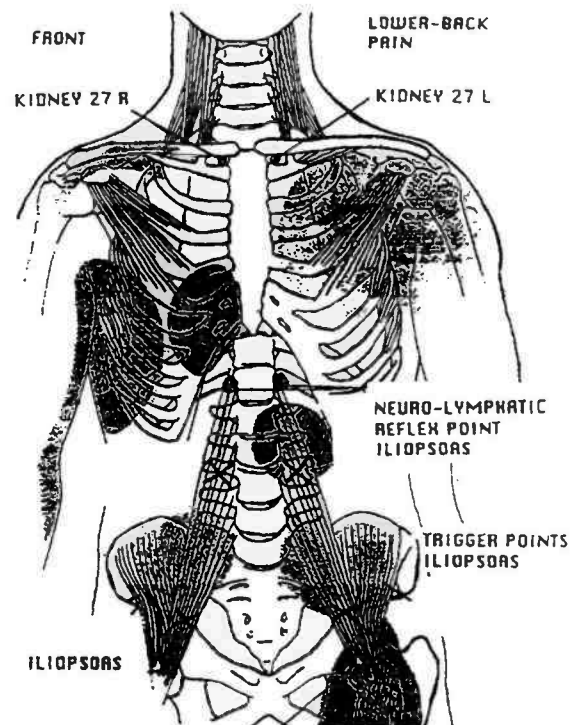


Figure 3

- **Release trigger points in the piriformis muscle.** Lying down, apply pressure with a wooden dowel or tennis ball in the middle of the buttock muscle. If painful that is a trigger point. Hold pressure until pressure is only felt and pain has been alleviated. Self-stretch by performing the Respiratory Spinal Extension. Lying on the floor, arms extended out from the body, bring leg over the other, knee toward the floor in a spinal twist. Diaphragmatically breathe and hold stretch. Repeat and do the opposite side.

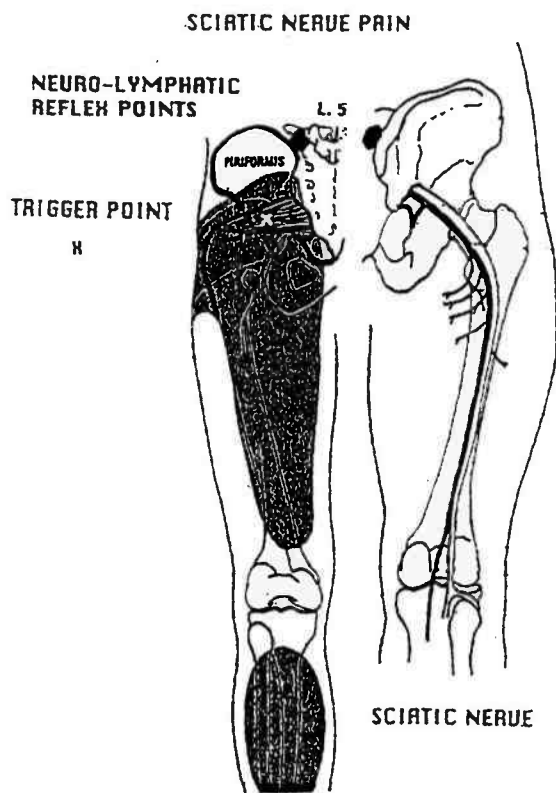


Figure 4

- **Sacral Rock.** Rock on the sacral bone to re-establish sacral balance between the two hip bones.
- **Diaphragmatically breathe** (belly breathe) throughout the entire process.
- **Rub the neuro-lymphatic reflex points** for each of the above muscles and the buttock muscles. Rub specific points for drainage of the lymph that causes pain and swelling in the lower back. .

Rub the top of the coccyx, Governing Vessel-2 and Kidney-27 on the Right and the inside of the lower one-third of the inner leg. See Figures. 2 & 3.

- Retest the muscles for strength and energy.
- **Take a hot Epsom Salts bath** (two cups) for 15 minutes. Epsom Salts helps to draw poisons and toxins from sore muscles and relax the muscles and the nervous system.
- **Drink water.**

### No More Back Pain!

For more information, you may contact me at  
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