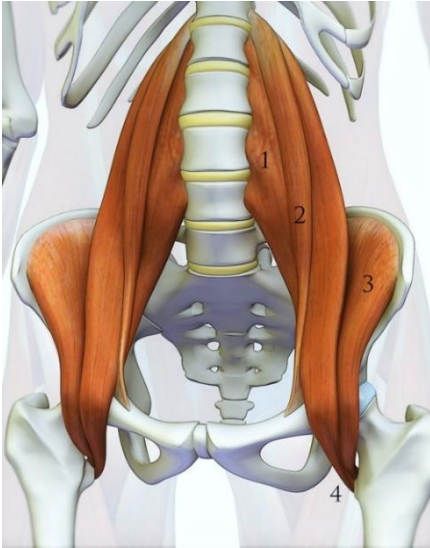


ALIGN's Guide to Improving the Equestrian

Article 1: An introduction of the relationship between muscle tension, pelvic position and low back pain.



Anatomy:

Your hip flexors are composed of muscles that attach to your spine and pelvis before joining at your hip.

Why all the hype?

Because your hip flexors attach along the front of your lower spine they pull it forward and create the classic “hollow back” posture. This leads to uneven pressure through the discs and joints in your spine. When these structures become irritated the back muscles tense, making it harder to stay relaxed through your pelvis (Sit Bones). Uneven pressure causes A) further wear & tear of the structures in your back. B) confusing input to your horse.

UNEVEN PRESSURE LEADS TO:

A) WEAR & TEAR OF YOUR BACK

B) CONFUSING INPUT TO YOUR HORSE

There are a number of riders who are “tighter” in either their left or right hip flexor. This leads to a twisting of the pelvis, back pain and makes full symmetry in the saddle impossible.

- To help wrap your head around this concept, pick up a pair of your everyday shoes and notice the wear patterns on your shoe soles. Usually there is a difference between left and right. Asymmetries in your walking often stem from the pelvis being “out of alignment”. When this occurs the rider will begin to feel the unevenness manifest as pain in their low back. *The same uneven stress that causes portions of your shoes to wear out faster can cause one region of your horses back to become tighter or sore.*



Do yourself and your horse a favor and learn how to restore body symmetry. Learning how to isolate and correct pelvic and hip flexor imbalance leads to improved ability of rider to communicate with horse as well as comfort in the saddle.