

ALIGN's Guide to Improving the Equestrian

Article 2: Inappropriate Hip Flexor Stretching

Unfortunately, most "hip flexor stretches" are inappropriate for equestrians. That goes double for riders with back pain!

When you spend time in the saddle, even with fairly good posture, you dramatically increase the compression on your lumbar spine and discs.

Proper hip flexor stretching is critical to alleviating excess stress on the discs, bones and muscles of your lower back. Before going over proper stretching it is important to discuss what not to do!

This is **WRONG**



The muscular portions of your hip flexors are deep in your abdomen.

- They cannot be "worked" or "released" by using a foam roller or a ball. In fact, this activity is not particularly kind on your intestines.

Improper Hip Flexor Stretch

This commonly taught stretch creates low back joint and disc compression, leading to *hollow back posture*.



APPROPRIATE Hip Flexor Stretching:

To stretch correctly you must start in a relaxed position before engaging your glute max (derrière) then lunging slowly forward from your hips (not shoulders). There are several additional cues that can make for an even safer and more effective stretch.

Beyond stretching: Imagine what a hands-on release of your psoas (one of the hip flexors) can do for you. Would you like to learn how to address it daily yourself? ALIGN offers safe stretching and hands on treatment for reducing hip flexor tension and alleviating low back pain.

To learn more about customizing your hip flexor stretch to improve pelvic symmetry and flexibility, call ALIGN for an appointment with Dr. Mason Shelton!