

OUCH MY ACHING HIP!

by Jack R. Giangliulio, D.C., B.S.

Did you ever get the feeling that you could not perform a *grande battement devant* without a sharp pain in the front of your hip? Yeah, you and a million other dancers. Guess what? You have just injured your hip flexor muscles. The hip flexors are a group of muscles that work together to raise the thigh towards the chest. The hip flexor muscle that is primarily injured is the Rectus Femoris Muscle. It runs from the pelvis bone down along the front of the leg, inserting onto the shin bone, via the knee cap. Another commonly injured hip flexor is the Iliopsoas (it is actually two muscles that share a common tendon of insertion). It originates from the lumbar spine and inserts onto the upper portion of the thigh bone. In dancers the hip flexors are usually injured by over-use coupled with poor foot control (see my articles on foot control).

If you have injured your hip flexors and are being treated by a physician who only prescribes medications, go find yourself a sports injury doctor who will provide you with quality manual care. You need a doctor who understands that you are a dancer, you push your body to the limits of possible human movements and you do it with a smile.

If your injury is immediately treated with a combination of physical modalities and manual therapies (Specific Joint Manipulation and muscle specific massage and stretches) you may be dancing like your normal self within a couple of treatments. The key word is **immediately**. If you are treated the day of your injury, you may only need one treatment and a couple days of rest (if you have the luxury).

If you have injured your hip flexors and have not sought treatment, let it be known that you are like most other dancers. If this condition is not properly treated one of three things may occur:

- 1) It gets better; however, it will reoccur throughout your career.
- 2) In most cases it will turn into a bigger problem involving all of the hip muscles and the low back; making it difficult to even move the hip.
- 3) Number one followed by number two.

So remember, when dealing with a hip flexor injury, immediate proper care is necessary to prevent future complications.

Dance Long and Healthy

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