



Gluteal Syndrome Information Leaflet

What is Gluteal Syndrome?

Gluteal Syndrome refers to a collection of conditions affecting the muscles, tendons, and soft tissues in the gluteal (buttock) region. It is often characterised by pain, weakness, and discomfort in the buttocks, hips, or lower back. The syndrome can be caused by overuse, injury, or inflammation of the gluteal muscles and the surrounding structures, such as tendons or nerves.

Common Causes

Gluteal Syndrome can develop from various factors, including:

- **Overuse or repetitive strain:** Excessive running, jumping, or activities that place strain on the gluteal muscles.
- **Injury:** Trauma from falls, collisions, or other physical impact to the hips or buttocks.
- **Weakness or imbalance:** Weakness in the gluteal muscles can lead to poor posture, increased strain on other muscles, and the development of pain.
- **Tendonitis:** Inflammation of the tendons in the gluteal region (often called gluteal tendinopathy) due to overuse or injury.
- **Piriformis syndrome:** Compression or irritation of the sciatic nerve by the piriformis muscle, located near the gluteal muscles, causing pain or numbness down the leg.

Symptoms of Gluteal Syndrome

Patients with Gluteal Syndrome may experience:

- **Pain in the buttocks:** The most common symptom, which may be dull or sharp and may worsen with activity.

- **Hip and lower back pain:** Discomfort can extend from the buttocks to the hips and lower back.
- **Leg pain:** In some cases, pain can radiate down the back of the leg, similar to sciatica.
- **Weakness:** You may feel weakness in the gluteal muscles or hips, making activities like walking, climbing stairs, or standing difficult.
- **Tenderness:** The gluteal area may feel tender to the touch, especially around the hip or the bony part of the pelvis.

Diagnosis

A thorough clinical examination by a healthcare professional is key to diagnosing Gluteal Syndrome. This may include:

- **Physical assessment:** Testing the range of motion and strength of the hip and gluteal muscles.
- **Medical imaging:** X-rays, MRIs, or ultrasounds can help identify any underlying issues such as tendon damage, inflammation, or other musculoskeletal conditions.
- **Provocation tests:** Tests to determine whether certain movements cause or exacerbate symptoms, which can help pinpoint the exact source of pain.

Treatment Options

Treatment for Gluteal Syndrome typically involves a combination of approaches aimed at reducing pain and improving function. Common treatments include:

1. Rest and Activity Modification

- Limiting activities that worsen the pain, such as running, prolonged sitting, or heavy lifting, can give the muscles time to heal.

2. Physiotherapy

- A tailored **physiotherapy programme** can strengthen the gluteal muscles, correct muscle imbalances, and improve flexibility. Exercises targeting the glutes and hips can help reduce strain and prevent further injury.

3. Medications

- Over-the-counter **anti-inflammatory medications** (NSAIDs) such as ibuprofen may help relieve pain and reduce inflammation.
- In more severe cases, **prescription medications** or muscle relaxants may be recommended.

4. Injections

- **Corticosteroid injections** may be used to reduce inflammation and provide pain relief, especially in cases of gluteal tendinopathy or bursitis.
- **Platelet-rich plasma (PRP)** injections are sometimes used to promote healing in the affected tendons or tissues.

5. Ice or Heat Therapy

- Applying **ice packs** to the affected area can help reduce inflammation and pain, especially after physical activity.
- **Heat therapy** can improve circulation and reduce muscle stiffness.

6. Stretching and Strengthening Exercises

- Gentle **stretching** of the gluteal muscles, piriformis, and hip flexors can help improve flexibility and reduce muscle tension.
- Strengthening exercises for the core and hips can support better posture and take pressure off the gluteal muscles.

7. Surgical Intervention

- In rare cases, where conservative treatments fail, surgery may be considered to address tendon tears, remove scar tissue, or release pressure on the sciatic nerve.

Prevention Tips

To prevent Gluteal Syndrome or minimise recurrence:

- **Maintain proper posture:** Especially during activities that require sitting for long periods or repetitive movements.
- **Strengthen gluteal and core muscles:** Regular exercises targeting these areas can improve stability and prevent strain on the lower back and hips.
- **Warm up before physical activity:** Proper warm-up and stretching can help reduce the risk of injury to the gluteal muscles.
- **Avoid overtraining:** Ensure that you allow adequate recovery time between intense physical activities to prevent overuse injuries.

When to Seek Medical Help

If you experience persistent or worsening pain in the buttocks, hips, or legs, or if your symptoms are affecting your ability to perform everyday activities, it is important to seek medical advice. Early diagnosis and treatment of Gluteal Syndrome can prevent the condition from becoming chronic and reduce the risk of complications.

Mr Nasr would be happy to help you through your journey to recovery