

Groin Strain

What is a groin strain?

A strain is a stretch or tear of a muscle or tendon. People commonly call such an injury a "pulled" muscle. The muscles in your groin help bring your legs together. There are two muscles that may commonly get injured in a groin strain: the adductor magnus (the large muscle running down the inner side of the thigh) and the sartorius (a thinner muscle that starts on the outside of your hip, crosses your thigh and attaches near the inside of the knee).

How does it occur?

A groin strain most commonly occurs when you are running or jumping or when there is a forced push-off or cut.

What are the symptoms?

You will have pain or tenderness along the inner side of your thigh or in the groin area. You will have pain when you bring your legs together. You may have pain when lifting your knee up.

How is it diagnosed?

Your doctor will take note of your symptoms and will examine your thigh and hip.

How is it treated?

Treatment may include:

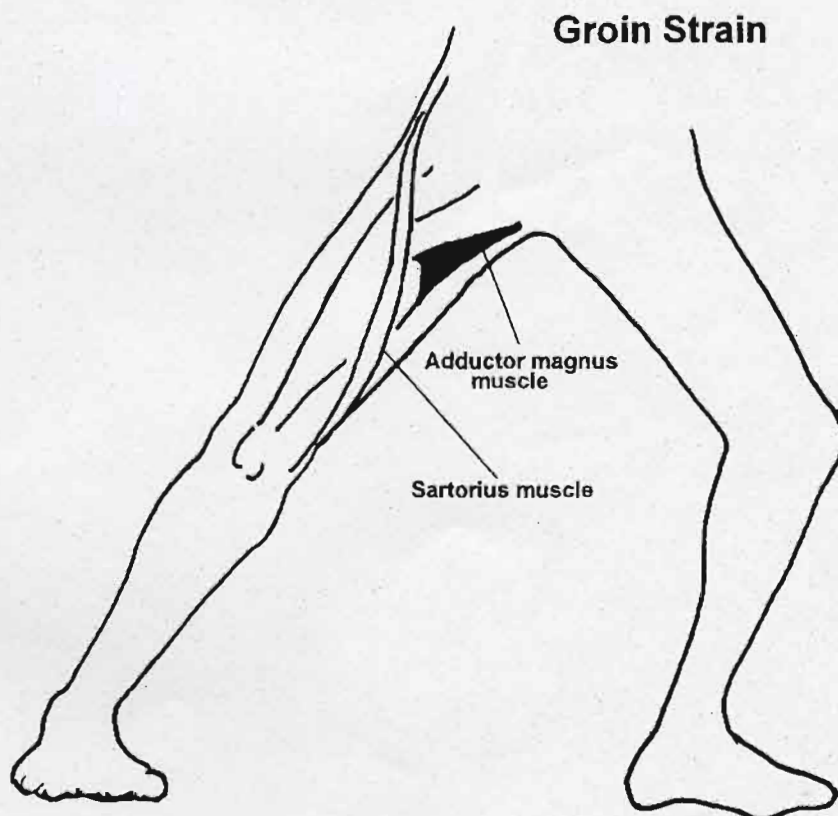
- applying ice to the strained muscle for 20 to 30 minutes every 3 to 4 hours for 2 or 3 days or until the pain goes away
- taking an anti-inflammatory medication prescribed by your doctor
- wearing a supportive bandage called a thigh wrap or taping your thigh or groin
- doing the rehabilitation exercises you are given.

While you are recovering from your injury, you will need to change your sport or activity to one that does not make

your condition worse. For example, you may need to swim instead of run.

When can I return to my sport or activity?

The goal of rehabilitation is to return you to your sport or activity as soon as is safely possible. If you return too soon you may worsen your injury, which could lead to permanent damage. Everyone recovers from injury at a different rate. Return to your sport or activity will be determined by how soon your



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groin area recovers, not by how many days or weeks it has been since your injury occurred. In general, the longer you have symptoms before you start treatment, the longer it will take to get better.

You may safely return to your sport or activity when, starting from the top of the list and progressing to the end, each of the following is true:

- You have full range of motion in the injured leg compared to the uninjured leg.
- You have full strength of the injured leg compared to the uninjured leg.
- You can jog straight ahead without pain or limping.
- You can sprint straight ahead without pain or limping.
- You can do 45-degree cuts, first at half-speed, then at full-speed.
- You can do 20-yard figures-of-eight, first at half-speed, then at full-speed.
- You can do 90-degree cuts, first at half-speed, then at full-speed.
- You can do 10-yard figures-of-eight, first at half-speed, then at full-speed.
- You can jump on both legs without pain and you can jump on the injured leg without pain.

How can I prevent a groin strain?

A groin strain is best prevented by warming up properly and doing groin muscle stretching exercises prior to your activities. This is especially important in activities such as sprinting or jumping.



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Groin Strain Rehabilitation Exercises

Begin stretching your groin muscles as soon as you can tolerate a stretch to that area.

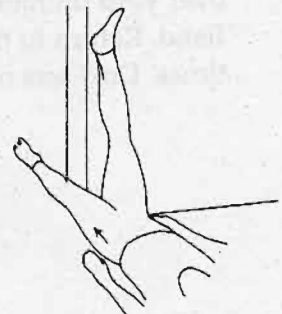
1. **Hip adductor stretch:** Lie on your back, bend your knees, and put your feet flat on the floor. Gently spread your knees apart, stretching the muscles on the inside of your thigh. Hold this for 20 seconds. Repeat 3 times.



Hip adductor stretch

You may do exercises 2 and 3 when the pain in the groin muscles decreases.

2. **Hamstring stretch:** Lie on your back with your buttocks close to a doorway and extend your legs straight out in front of you along the floor. Raise the injured leg up and rest it against the wall next to the door frame. Hold this position for 30 to 60 seconds. You will feel a stretch in the back of your thigh. Repeat 3 times.



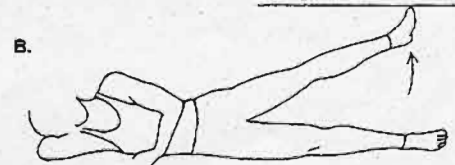
Hamstring stretch

3. **Sidelying leg raises:**

A. **Injured side down:** Lie on your injured side. Bend your uninjured leg over your injured leg so that the foot of your uninjured leg is flat on the floor in front of the knee of your injured leg. Tighten the muscles on the front of the thigh of the injured leg and lift that leg 8 to 10 inches off the floor, keeping your knee straight. Slowly lower your leg to the floor. Repeat 10 times. Do 3 sets of 10.

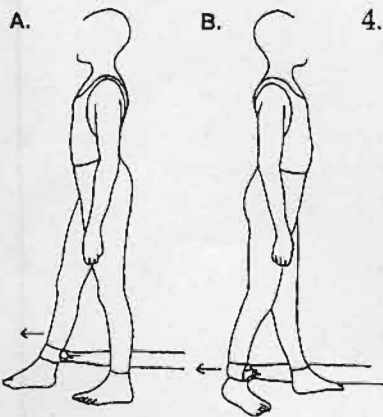


B. **Injured side up:** Lying on your uninjured side, tighten the front thigh muscles on your injured leg and lift that leg 8 to 10 inches away from the other leg. Keep the leg straight. Repeat 10 times. Do 3 sets of 10.



Sidelying leg raises

When the sidelying leg raises become easy, it is time to start strengthening your thigh muscles and groin muscles using the Thera-Band exercises.



4. **Resisted hip strengthening exercises:** Tie a loop in one end of the Thera-Band and slip the loop around the ankle of your injured leg. Make a knot in the other end of the tubing and close the knot in a door.

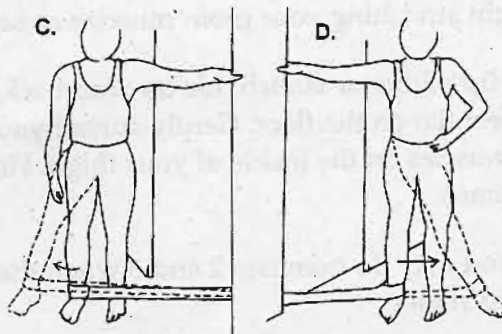
A. **Hip flexion:** Stand facing away from the door. Tighten the muscles at the top of your thigh and bring your leg forward away from the door, keeping your knee straight. Return to the starting position. Repeat 10 times. Do 3 sets of 10.

B. **Hip extension:** Face the door. Tighten your thigh muscles and pull your leg straight backward. Return to the starting position. Repeat 10 times. Do 3 sets of 10.

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C. Hip abduction: Stand sideways to the door, with your injured leg away from the door. Tighten your thigh muscles and extend your leg out to the side. Return to the starting position. Repeat 10 times. Do 3 sets of 10.

D. Hip adduction: Stand sideways to the door, with your uninjured leg away from the door. Bring your injured leg across your body sideways, crossing over your uninjured leg and stretching the Thera-Band. Return to the starting position. Repeat 10 times. Do 3 sets of 10.



Resisted hip strengthening exercises