

WHY STRETCHING ISN'T FIXING YOUR TIGHT HIPS

A Physio's insight into persistent tight hips

Hindmarsh Physio & Sports | Expert Care in Adelaide



“Tight hips” are one of the most common complaints we hear. And the usual solution?

Stretch more.

But if you've been stretching your hips regularly and the tightness keeps coming back... there's a good reason for that

TIGHT DOESN'T ALWAYS MEAN SHORT

Most people assume tight muscles just need to be lengthened. In reality, that “tight” feeling is often coming from muscles that are overworked and fatigued, not shortened.

Take your hip flexors—especially the psoas.

This deep muscle connects your spine to your hips and plays an important role in stability.

When your core and glutes aren't supporting you well, your psoas steps in to help. Over time, it works harder than it should, becomes fatigued, and starts to feel tight.

That tightness is often protective, not a flexibility issue.

So when you stretch it repeatedly, you may get short-term relief...

but you're not addressing the real problem.

IT'S NOT JUST YOUR HIP FLEXORS

This pattern doesn't stop there.

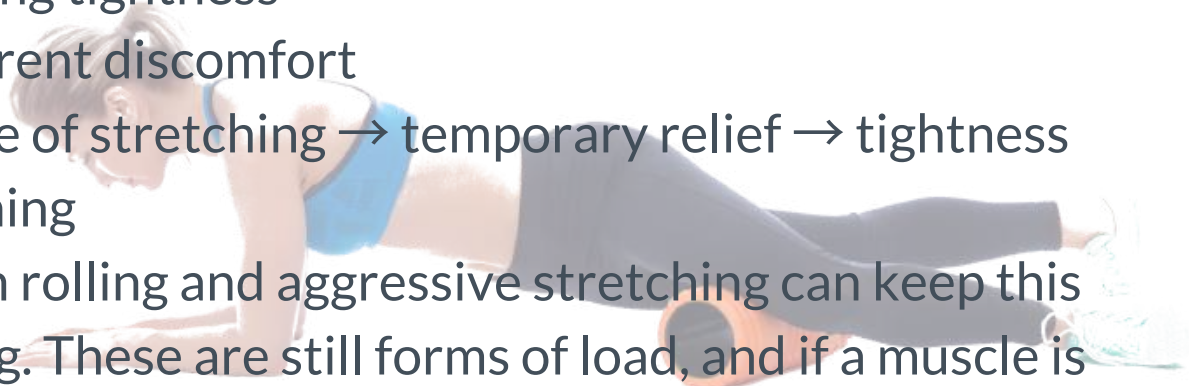
Other muscles around the hip—like the piriformis and TFL (tensor fascia latae) often behave the same way.

When the glutes aren't doing their job effectively, these smaller muscles pick up the slack.

The result?

- Ongoing tightness
- Recurrent discomfort
- A cycle of stretching → temporary relief → tightness returning

Even foam rolling and aggressive stretching can keep this cycle going. These are still forms of load, and if a muscle is already irritated, adding more load can stop it from settling down



SOMETIMES IT'S NOT A MUSCLE PROBLEM AT ALL

There's another piece that often gets missed.
Sometimes tight hips are less about muscles... and more about movement.

If your hips, pelvis, and lower back aren't working well together, your body will compensate:

- Some muscles overwork
- Others underperform
- Movement becomes inefficient

This creates the exact feeling people try to stretch away.
In these cases, the issue is mechanical, not structural damage—just a coordination problem in how your body moves.
And importantly:
Stretching alone won't fix that.



A WORD OF CAUTION ON AGGRESSIVE HIP STRETCHING

If you're feeling a deep pinching pain in the front of your hip or groin, be careful with strong hip flexor stretches—especially long, deep lunging positions.

Pushing aggressively into these positions can place significant stress on the front of the hip joint, rather than actually improving muscle function.

That doesn't mean stretching is “bad”—but it does mean it needs to be:

- Appropriate for your body
- Pain-free
- Part of a broader plan

If a stretch causes sharp, pinching, or worsening pain, it's worth reassessing the cause.



WHAT ACTUALLY HELPS TIGHT HIPS LONG-TERM?

If your hips always feel tight, a better question is:
“Why does this feel tight in the first place?”

Lasting improvement usually comes from:

- Improving glute strength and activation
- Supporting your body with better core control
- Restoring how your hips, pelvis, and spine move together
- Reducing compensation patterns

When this happens, those overworked muscles can finally switch off.

And the tightness?

It often settles on its own—without needing constant stretching.

**SPEAK WITH OUR PHYSIOS FOR
EXERCISES AND TREATMENT TO HELP**



Physio-Backed Exercises to Address Tight Feeling Hips

HINDMARSH PHYSIOTHERAPY & SPORTS INJURY CLINIC

281 Port Rd Hindmarsh
Ph 8346 2000
hindmarshphysio.com.au

We are passionate about providing our patients and community with information on prevention and management

Stay on top of your body's needs and avoid bigger setbacks. Speak with our Physios for individual advice and treatment



Take that first step and book a Physiotherapy Assessment

You can call us on **83462000** at Hindmarsh or **[CONTACT US ONLINE HERE](#)** to request an appointment.

We are passionate about providing our patients and community with information on prevention and management of many conditions. This PDF is not intended as a substitute for medical advice or treatment and should not be interpreted as such. Always seek advice from a qualified medical professional and use of this information is at your own risk