



## **Preventing Low Back Pain in Runners**

### **What is it?**

Low Back Pain is any symptom (including stiffness) that originates from a structure in the lumbar spine or pelvic. Common areas include the low back, posterior glutes, lateral hip and thigh, posterior thigh and less commonly the groin and anterior thigh.

### **Possible Causes in Runners**

- Core strength does not equal the physical demands on your body. Relative weakness either results in excessive mobility in trunk and/or pelvis OR rigidity in spine from abdominal bracing. Goal: controlled fluid mobility.
- Stretching: not enough or poor form
- Balance Deficits: when you run you are on one foot 100% of the time
- Pathology: genetic or acquired.

### **Core Strengthening**

- Foundational
  - Supine Base Pelvic Floor, Transverse Abdominus, Multifidus
  - Maintaining spinal position (often neutral) in static positions: tabletop, bird dog, plank
- Functional
  - Move it and challenge it: pelvic bridge with marching, side-lying plank with side leg lift, lunges with good control, running drills with good pelvic control

### **Stretching**

- Hip Flexor:
  - Standing quad stretch- knee under hip, posterior pelvic tilt
  - Kneeling Lunge – posterior pelvic tilt
- Hamstring:
  - Standing: hinge at hips and ‘poke’ tailbone away
  - Lying: belt or hand behind thigh, knee above hip
- Gluteals
  - Figure 4/Piriformis, Knee to Chest
- Spine
  - Lower Trunk Rotation
  - Cat-Camel: segmental
  - Prayer/Child’s Pose

## **Balance**

- Single Leg Challenges
  - Static x 30 seconds, eyes-open, eyes-closed
  - Static on uneven surfaces
  - Move other limbs: star taps
  - Bound and hold

## **When to seek treatment :**

- Don't ignore it or run through it if it is affecting your form.
- Worsening or not improving with self treatment and rest.
- Judge the quality of the pain: sharp is telling your something different than stiff.
- History of previous LBP that is resurfacing with increased mileage.
- Any associated Leg Weakness or Numbness/Tingling
- Still persistent after incorporating the above exercises into your routine.
- Interfering with your training and you want to make sure you are doing the right things.

## **Just for You:**

1. Free 10-minute Physical Therapy Consults. Call to Schedule.
2. Good Food Store Presentation: April 12<sup>th</sup>, 6pm “Cross-Training from a PT Perspective”
3. RWM members get 10% of a Runner's Clinic. Check out info on website.

**Visit our website and click under patient resources for  
much more information on multiple problems**

[www.alpineptmissoula.com](http://www.alpineptmissoula.com)

[www.healthandfitness101.com](http://www.healthandfitness101.com)

**Alpine Physical Therapy – 2 locations in Missoula**

### **South**

5000 Blue Mountain Road  
In the Peak Health and Wellness Ctr.  
406-251-2323

### **North**

2825 Stockyard Road, Suite I-3  
In the North Reserve Business Ctr.  
406-541-2606