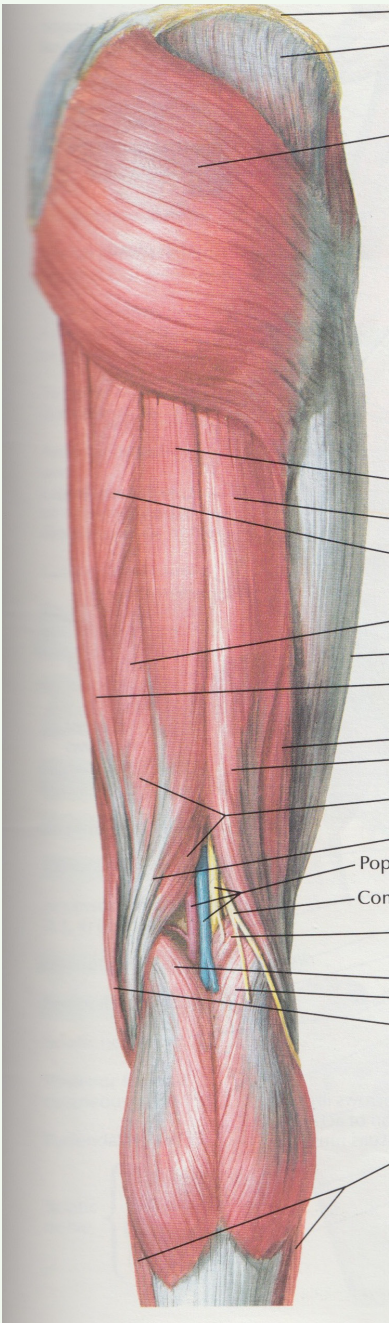


# Muscle of the Month: Gluteus Maximus



I MUST share some very valuable information to help you avoid the same problems I've been helping my clients solve for the past year. As I continue to grow and serve more clients through my independent MAT business, I work 2 days/week as a PT at "Knee Specialists of Wisconsin." Our clients have advanced stage osteoarthritis in one or both of their knees, are in terrible amounts of pain, and are trying to avoid knee replacement surgery. I use MAT to get to the "bottom" of why my physical therapy client's joints broke down in the first place, as I help them move better, feel better and live better.

**I believe I have identified one of THE key issues affecting 95% of my clients with knee pain and joint deterioration: The Gluteus Maximus muscles, or buttocks, are not working efficiently!**

Our Gluteus Maximus muscles are 2 of the largest muscles on our body. As you can see from the picture, the "glutes" begin up in the hip, and they attach to the outside of the knee joint through the Iliotibial band (ITBand). Any of you ever experience tight IT bands?? Well, typically we rely upon our glutes to be the most efficient muscles we use to get up and down from a chair, toilet, or car seat, etc. How many times do you do this each day, each month, each year.....? How do you know you are using your glutes correctly? What do you think happens after years of wear and tear from improperly balanced forces through our important hip and knee joints?

After specifically analyzing the joint and muscular mechanics of my clients, I have found it is more common than I realized that the gluteus muscles are not working properly to balance the forces around our hip and knee joints. Unfortunately, 80% of the jobs today are considered "sedentary" and so most people are sitting on their buttock muscles all day long. The pressure applied can weaken or "inhibit" these muscles from performing their intended function. This is not helping matters!

# Muscle of the Month: Gluteus Maximus

**Our buttocks muscles were not designed to be just a SEAT CUSHION!!!**

You are likely wondering, “What can we do about this?” Well, you are in luck. There is hope! I have some helpful and easy to implement strategies for you.

1. While sitting, simply squeeze your cheeks underneath you, press your feet flat into the floor, as you feel yourself rise up a little in your chair (stop giggling, I’m serious! :) and hold this for 6 seconds, rest 5 seconds and repeat this series 6 times. You can do both sides together or try one at a time.
2. Stand up straight behind the chair, hold the back of the chair with your hands for support, and squeeze your buttocks now. Feel the entire back side of your body begin to come to life again? Great! Contracting your “Glutes” will stimulate a whole chain of muscles to work more efficiently as you engage them, and then your hip flexors will naturally get the message to relax and elongate.

Want more? There are all sorts of great exercises to strengthen the glutes, however we must be sure that the “full circle” of communication between our brain and gluteus muscles is intact before we move on to the strengthening phase. Luckily, it is fairly easy to test all 3 of the different sections of your “glutes” to see which ones are truly working and which ones may be weak. I’m happy to help you make the most of your time in your chair and help to prevent a future of sore and creaky knees. Let me know how you like these exercises, and what other muscles may be of interest to you to learn more helpful tips to keep them activated!