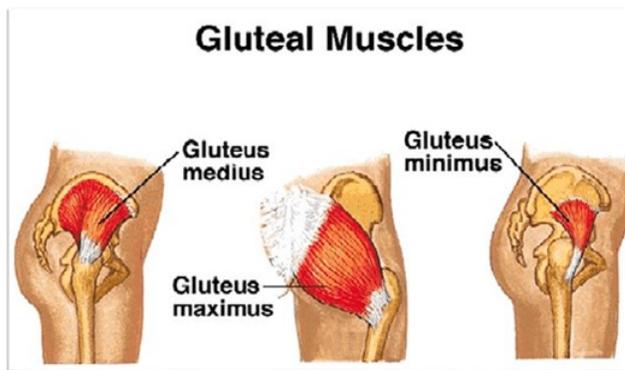




## Ring In The New Year By Toning Your Rear!

There is also tushie, tuckus, butt, ass, derrière, bottom, hindquarters, behind, rump, caboose, can, keister, duff, tail, seat and many others you all can think of. With so many words for what we collectively know as our “glutes”, they must be important! But what, exactly, are they? Our glutes are comprised of 3 muscles: the gluteus maximus, medius and minimus. The maximus is the largest and is primarily responsible for hip extension; moving the thigh backwards in respect to our trunk (ex., during walking or in rising from a chair) and also rotates the thigh out with respect to the body. The medius and minimus perform similar functions. Depending on the position of the hip, these muscles help to rotate the thigh in and out. One of the most important roles of the gluteus medius is as a stabilizer of the hip and pelvis when standing on one leg. It keeps the pelvis level and prevents the hip from dropping out to the side or the trunk from leaning over to one side. Thus, it plays a huge role in walking, running or any one- legged and balance activities.

The gluteal muscles are essential in performing For instance, our ability to position; ability to balance or hills, push off our leg in out of a chair, bend over bottom while lying down, to name a few. Maintain- to perform these functions independent as we age.



incredibly important as they are many functional daily activities. maintain the trunk in an erect on one leg, go up and down steps walking, squat, lunge, stand up and stand back up, lift your and get up and down off the floor ing glute strength and the ability help to keep us safe, mobile and

In addition, strong and healthy glutes help to reduce stress and strain to other areas of the body. If we don't have the glute strength to stand up out of a chair we tend to compensate by arching and pulling with the back; if we are unable to maintain a level pelvis in one- legged standing it tends to result in the knee on the same side turning in and can cause knee pain and stress to arthritic joints and knee ligaments. This can translate all the way down to our ankles and the ability to bear weight correctly on our foot or maintain ankle stability. Our hamstrings are also hip extensors and the gluteus maximus works to reduce the workload of the hamstrings which helps to prevent hamstring strains or injuries. Due to the large size of the gluteals they help in force production which is essential in running, throwing, jumping, tackling, and hiking. And here's another interesting little tidbit. To get the best function out of your glutes, it is essential that you have good toe, ankle and hip mobility which allows them to be used in their most efficient manner.

So, what is the best way to strengthen these muscles in a way that will help them to remain strong and functional? It depends on where you start. If you are recovering from injury or surgery, have hip osteoarthritis, or are generally deconditioned it is best to start with low load exercises. It is also important to choose exercises that do not easily allow from compensatory activity from other hip muscles as this can often lead to hip or groin pain. Electromyography studies have helped to determine how much force is being activated with certain movements and exercises and have helped us to determine which exercises are best in not creating compensatory muscle activation. As such, trainers and therapists are able to prescribe exercises that best fit your fitness level, goals and concurrent issues.

In starting at lower loads, it is best to start with weight-bearing exercises using both legs at the same time. The goal of these exercises is to get the glutes to fire properly, build a strong backside, prevent injuries and maintain proper alignment and biomechanics. Following is a list of best exercises to target your glutes starting at lower loads and progressing to higher ones. Start with no added weight and progress from there. Please ask us for help if you have any questions or are uncertain about the movement pattern.

**Low Load Exercises on 2 legs:**

- Squat
- Bridge
- Dead lift

**Progress to one-legged activities:**

- Forward step ups
- Sideways lunge
- Sideways stepping
- One-legged bridge
- Split squats w/o weight
- Single leg standing

**Then, when ready, higher load exercises:**

- Side plank with leg raises
- Plank with hip extension
- Dumbbell walking lunge
- Side stepping w/ band
- Skater squat
- One legged squat
- One legged dead lift
- One legged wall squat
- Leg raises on your side

Talk with your trainer if you would like a glute - specific program set up for you. And don't forget your New Year's Resolution for 2019 - To have one, fine-tuned tush!

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