Free Hips, Balanced Psoas Exercise List

• **Tap the whole body.** Upper body, back, legs, arms

• **Tap the diaphragm:** Tap the area of origin of the diaphragm, lowest six ribs, xiphoid process of sternum, lumbar spine.

• **Diaphragmatic Breathing.** Breathe through your nose if possible and move your diaphragm, the most important muscle of breathing. The diaphragm moves downward when we inhale and upwards when we exhale. Breathing is important for the iliopsoas muscle!

• **Hip joint location.** The hip joint is located behind the middle of the inguinal ligament.

• **The hip is located joint above the sit bone** (Ischial tuberosity). We touch sit bone and visualize the hip joint which can be found a few centimeters above. Proprioception and imagery can improve flexibility and balance.

• **Practice the three possible movements at the hip joint.** First the perspective of the hip joint. Move from the hip joint without much movement from the pelvis, back and in particular we avoid torsion in the stance leg.

• **Drop shoulders and lift leg:** For tension release and activation of the psoas, release peripheral muscles also, especially trapezius.

• **The pelvic perspective.** We move the pelvis on the femur in a variety of ways.

• **Is our hip joint centered?** We test the elasticity of the inguinal ligament and the hip area. We compare the right and the left side. How about rotating the pelvis, are we more flexible/tight on one side?

• **The femoral head glides into the acetabular socket:** When we lift the leg, the femoral head rolls in the hip socket and glides downwards, deeper into the socket.
• **Piriformis release.** In this exercise we free a tight piriformis muscle by rubbing on its insertional tendon. First locate the greater trochanter at the top and side of the leg. Then massage the area just behind and above it.

• **Touching the Iliacus muscle.** Place your fingertips just on the inside of the anterior superior iliac spine of the pelvis. Lean forward from the hips to relax the abdominal wall and push your fingers inward and outward against the inside of the ilium. Lift one leg at a time and feel the tension of the iliacus. Does one feel more active, bigger, than the other?

• **Psoas Walk:** Touch the insertion and origin of the psoas major. Take a few steps forward and backward and imagine the psoas major lengthening and shortening. Do this at different levels of the origin of the psoas major starting at T12 and all the way down to L4.

• **Psoas strength test while standing:** press against the thigh when lifting one leg. Is there a difference in strength between the left and right side?

• **Strengthening the Ilopoas:** Place a medium or large size towel on the thigh of one leg and aim to lift the leg just over 90 degrees. Bounce the thigh up and down, adduct and abduct your hip joint. This exercise can also be done with a long Franklin Method band.

• **Stretching the posas in standing No. 1.** To stretch the left psoas position the right leg in a forward lunge position. Shift your pelvis forward and lift the left arm up over your head. Bend the spine to the left to increase the stretch of the psoas. Imagine the psoas releasing and lengthening.
• **Stretching psoas in standing No. 2.** To stretch the left psoas place your right foot on the seat of a chair. Move your pelvis towards the chair and posteriorly rotate the pelvis. Lift the left arm up and flex the spine to the right.

• **Stretching the psoas in standing No. 3.** Place your thigh on the chair surface. Extend your spine and support yourself by placing your hands on a table. Make sure you are breathing and the diaphragm is moving freely. Hold the stretch for 20 seconds up to half a minute.

• **Psoas test No. 1 in the supine position.** Notice your lower back, is it off the floor? Are your shoulders relaxed? Extend your legs, your feet are sliding along the floor. Does this make your lower back arch up off the floor.

• **Psoas test No. 2 supine:** Can we stretch our legs straight up in the air? Is this easy or very tiring?

• **Psoas relaxation with towel:** We place a rolled towel under the transition between the thoracic and lumbar spine. Imagine the psoas relaxing, “melting” down next to the spine. Remain in this position for a minute or two.

• **Psoas flexibility test and dynamic stretching:** Place a rolled towel under your pelvis. Take your feet off the floor and hold on of your knees with your hands. Stretch the other leg upward, as vertical as possible and very slowly lower it down to the ground. Imagine the iliopectoral muscle lengthening. We repeat the exercise five to six times with the same leg. Compare sides. Is the practiced side more flexible, does the leg feel longer?
• **Hip flexions for the psoas:** With your knees bent, alternately lift one leg off the floor and lower it down, then the other. Your toes are touching the floor. Repeat about 20 times and imagine your back melting down to the ground. Imagine the psoas minor actively pulling the front of the pelvis upward.

• **Hip joint centering/ anti snapping hip exercise.** Lift the legs straight up in the air and shake them. Imagine the femoral heads sinking deeper into the hip sockets. Circle the legs a little and again imagine the femoral heads sinking deeper into the sockets.

• **Piriformis stretching / anti snapping hip exercise.** Lift your foot off the ground bend your knee. Pull that knee across your body to the opposite shoulder. Perhaps you feel some tension behind greater trochanter. Tap the area with your hands or a ball leg. Place the lower leg on your other thigh. Pull lower leg towards you and feel any tension below the greater trochanter. Tap this area and imagine the area melting and releasing. Compare hip mobility between sides and repeat the exercise on the other side.

• **Leg swing on towel:** Stand on a towel with one foot and swing the other leg back and forth. Imagine the iliopsoas lengthening and relaxes. Also perform lateral flexion with your spine. Compare sides and practice on the other side.

• **Psoas, breathing and kidneys:** When inhaling, the kidneys slide downward on the psoas major, and when exhaling, upward again. We put one hand on the front of the abdominal wall and one on the back at the level of the kidney. Slide your hands down as you inhale and slightly extend the spine. Flex your spine, slide your hands upward and imagine that the kidney upward again. Repeat four or five times, then compare the sides and repeat on the other side.

• **Notice your improved posture and calm state of mind.**

• **Lift your arms over your head, shake them. Drop them on an exhale.**