

# Sacroiliac Joint Dysfunction Exercises

## Purpose

Living with sacroiliac joint dysfunction, or sacroiliitis, can be challenging due to the pain and discomfort it causes in the lower back, buttocks, and sometimes even down the legs. The purpose of these exercises is to help alleviate the pain and improve mobility by strengthening the muscles around the sacroiliac joint and increasing flexibility.

## Equipment needed

- A yoga mat or comfortable surface for floor exercises
- A pillow for support during specific stretches
- A sturdy wall for balance during standing exercises

## Time required

- Each exercise session should take approximately 20-30 minutes.
  - Exercises can be performed 2-3 times daily, depending on your comfort level and pain.
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### 1. Hamstring stretches

- **Purpose:** To stretch and relieve tension in the hamstring muscles, which can help reduce strain on the sacroiliac joint.
- **How to do it:** Lie on your back with your buttocks close to a doorway. Extend your unhurt leg in front of you through the doorway. Lift your injured leg and place it against the wall next to the doorframe, keeping the leg as straight as possible. You should feel a stretch in the back of your thigh. Hold for 15-30 seconds and repeat three times.
- **Tip:** Keep your back flat against the floor to avoid straining your lower back while stretching.

### 2. Hip adductor stretch

- **Purpose:** To stretch the inner thigh muscles, which can help stabilize the pelvis and reduce SI joint pain.
- **How to do it:** Lie on your back, bend your knees, and place your feet flat on the floor. Slowly spread your knees apart to stretch your inner thigh muscles. Hold the stretch for 15-30 seconds and repeat three times.
- **Tip:** To increase the intensity of the stretch, gently press your knees down with your hands.

### 3. Glute exercises

- **Purpose:** To strengthen the gluteal muscles, which support the pelvis and reduce stress on the sacroiliac joint.
- **How to do it:** Lie on your stomach with your legs straight out behind you. Squeeze your buttock muscles together and hold for five seconds, then relax for five seconds. Perform two sets of 15 repetitions.
- **Tip:** Focus on squeezing your glutes evenly to maximize muscle engagement.

### 4. Lower trunk rotation

- **Purpose:** To increase flexibility in the lower back and gently stretch the muscles surrounding the sacroiliac joint.
- **How to do it:** Lie on your back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Tighten your stomach and push your lower back into the floor. While keeping your shoulders flat, gently rotate your legs to one side as far as possible, then repeat on the other side. Do this 10-20 times.
- **Tip:** Move slowly and controlled to avoid any jerky movements that could increase discomfort.

## 5. One knee to chest stretch

- **Purpose:** To stretch the buttock and lower back muscles, easing tension around the sacroiliac joint.
- **How to do it:** Lie on your back with your legs straight. Bring one knee up to your chest and grasp the back of your thigh, pulling the knee toward your chest. Hold for 15-30 seconds, then return to the original position. Repeat three times on each side.
- **Tip:** Keep your opposite leg straight and relaxed on the floor for a better glute stretch.

## 6. Both knees to chest stretch

- **Purpose:** To stretch and relieve lower back tension, helping reduce pain in the sacroiliac joint.
- **How to do it:** Lie on your back with knees bent and feet flat. Tighten your stomach muscles and push your lower back into the floor. Pull both knees to your chest and hold for five seconds, then relax for five seconds. Repeat this 10-20 times.
- **Tip:** As you pull your knees to your chest, exhale deeply to enhance the stretch.

## 7. Back bridge stretch

- **Purpose:** To strengthen the lower back and gluteal muscles, improving stability in the sacroiliac joint.
- **How to do it:** Lie on your back with knees bent, arms against your body, and palms flat on the floor. Squeeze your buttocks and raise your hips off the ground, bringing your body into a straight line. Hold for five seconds, then slowly lower yourself to the ground. Repeat 8-10 times.
- **Tip:** Keep your shoulders and feet firmly on the ground to maintain balance and stability.

## 8. Isometric hip adductor stretch

- **Purpose:** To strengthen the inner thigh muscles and provide support to the pelvis.
- **How to do it:** Sit on the floor with knees bent 90 degrees and a pillow placed between them, feet flat on the floor. Squeeze the pillow gently with your knees for five seconds, then relax for five seconds. Perform two sets of 15 repetitions.
- **Tip:** Focus on steady, even pressure to avoid straining the inner thigh muscles.

## 9. Quad stretches

- **Purpose:** To stretch the quadriceps, reducing pelvis and sacroiliac joint tension.
- **How to do it:** Stand an arm's length away from a wall, with the injured side farther from it. Face forward and steady yourself with one hand against the wall. Use the other hand to grab your injured ankle, pulling your heel toward your rear end. Keep your knees together, and avoid arching or twisting your back. Hold for 15-30 seconds.
- **Tip:** Keep your hips squared and avoid leaning forward to protect your lower back.

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## Reference

Romano Orthopaedic Center. (2020). *Sacroiliac joint pain exercises & stretches for relief*. <https://www.romanomd.com/blog/sacroiliac-joint-pain-exercises--stretches-for-relief-20341.html>