



ISAEC Quick Stats...

Patient referrals to date: **4,532**

Average wait time: **12 days**

Patients needing Imaging/Specialist: **339**

**Inter-professional Spine
Assessment and Education Clinics**

New Toronto Advanced Practice Clinicians Starting this Month!

We are excited to report that ISAEC is increasing its service delivery capabilities with the addition of two new Toronto Advanced Practice Clinicians (APCs). Improving access to services for patients and expanding ISAEC’s reach were just some of the many quality innovations we concentrated on this year. ISAEC services are now available in Vaughan and as part of the Toronto Western Family Health Team (TWFHT). Erika Uguccioni will be providing patients in Vaughn with ISAEC services while Deanna Baker, who is currently the TWFHT physiotherapist, will be providing ISAEC services to both TWFHT rostered patients as well as unrostered patients. Both physiotherapists bring a wealth of experience managing patients with a variety of MSK issues. They are a welcomed addition to the ISAEC team and we look forward to working with them in providing patients with rapid access, thorough consultations and personalised self-management plans. Welcome to the team Erika and Deanna!



The Importance of an Accurate Diagnosis



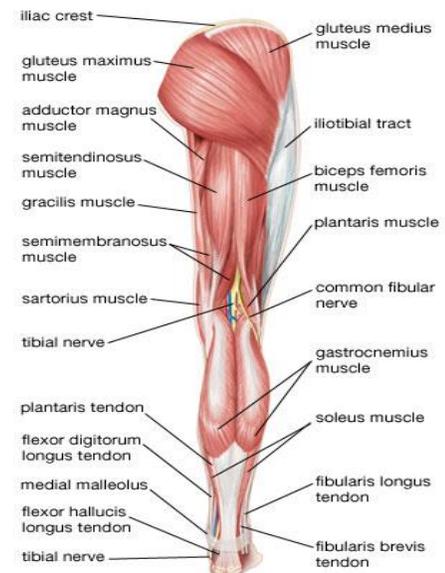
By Henry Candelaria, DC
Practice Leader - Toronto
Questions?
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Managing low back pain and in particular, low back related leg pain, at the primary care level can be frustrating and difficult, for both patients and providers. Many times patients present to our offices frustrated with the poor outcomes from various therapeutic approaches and treatments for their low back pain (LBP). When asked, ‘has anyone given you a diagnosis?’, the response is often a resounding ‘no.’ The frustration can even be sensed in the patients’ body language. It is times like this, when educating the patient on their condition as well as the importance of an accurate diagnosis is crucial. Identifying the correct diagnosis is key, as it helps direct patients to appropriate therapeutic options and allows for more accurate prognosticating.

Radiculopathies can commonly be misdiagnosed as tight hamstrings particularly when the lower lumbar nerve roots are involved. These patients will frequently present with posterior thigh pain which is often mistaken for a hamstring injury or tightness. Consequently, these patients are provided management advice focusing on their suspected hamstring issue which leads to frustration as the cause of their condition is not addressed.

To prevent this from happening it is crucial that these symptoms are assessed appropriately. Firstly, it is important to better define what is meant by ‘tightness’. In terms of muscle physiology, this word has little or no meaning. A skeletal muscle is physiologically stiff because of sarcomere motor unit component stiffness, or genetically short because of a reduced number of sarcomere units in series. Secondly, deciphering the difference between a stiff or short muscle versus another pain generating structure is exceedingly important particularly in the case of lower back related leg pain, or radiculopathy. Stretching & strengthening a stiff hamstring muscle will likely improve symptoms if the complaint is primarily myofascial in nature. However, if the presentation is one of radiculopathy, stretching a ‘tight’ hamstring muscle, particularly in the acute to subacute stages, will lead to aggravation of radiculopathic pain as a hamstring stretch will often involve the patient assuming some form of a ‘Straight Leg Raise’ like position. This tends to aggravate the condition and prolong recovery.

Establishing an accurate and clear diagnosis is crucial in the management of posterior thigh pain as it helps direct patients to the appropriate exercises and therapeutic options. If in doubt or your patient has had little progress with therapy, consider referring your patient to ISAEC.



Did you know?

ISAEC uses OTN to improve access to care for patients living in Northern Ontario communities