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Vivek Mahendru, M.D.

Piriformis Injection

Overview

The piriformis muscle starts inside the pelvis. It attaches to the sacrum, the triangular-shaped bone that is located between the pelvic bones at the base of the spine. The connection of the sacrum to the pelvic bones forms the sacroiliac joint. The other end of the piriformis muscle connects to the greater trochanter, the bump of bone on the top side of the hip.

The piriformis muscle is one of the external rotators of the hip and leg. As the muscle works, it facilitates turning the foot and leg outward. Trouble in the piriformis muscle can cause problems with the sciatic nerve. This is because the sciatic nerve runs under the piriformis muscle on its way out of the pelvis. The piriformis muscle can compress and irritate the sciatic nerve in this area, leading to the symptoms of sciatica.

Procedure

The piriformis injection is performed to relieve this buttock pain that may radiate into the back of the thigh and sometimes down the leg. An anesthetic and a steroid may be injected directly into an area of the muscle that is chronically contracted or tense using fluoroscopic guidance. In some cases it may be necessary to repeat the procedure with BOTOX. However, many patients can get significant relief from only one or two injections and physical therapy combinations.



Vivek Mahendru, M.D.

Dr. Mahendru is a fellowship trained pain management physician. He completed multiple fellowships in pain therapy at Roswell Park Cancer Center, Harvard Medical School, and Texas Tech University. Dr. Mahendru is often requested to publish articles in medical journals and lecture at national events, his work and dedication are widely recognized.

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