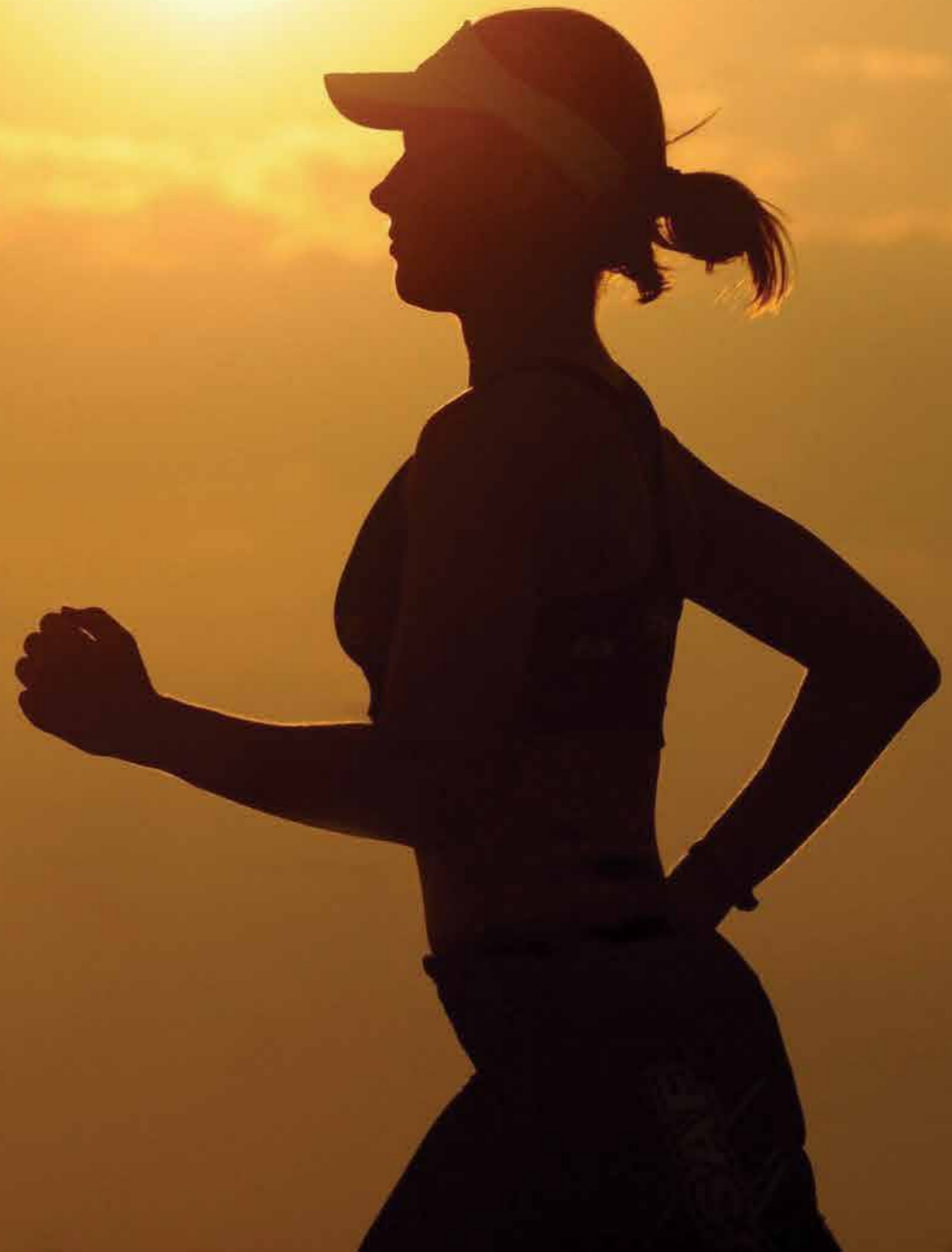

5 Exercises to Make You a Better Runner



Compliments of:



KC Performance Chiropractic & Rehab

LESSON 1

Your hamstrings (the muscles on the back of your thigh) are tight because they are weak. They work opposite of your bigger, stronger quad muscles (the muscles on the front of your leg).

Because the quads are bigger and stronger, your smaller, weaker hamstring muscles have to work extra hard.

So, how do you loosen up your hamstrings? By making them stronger!



EXERCISE 1

Single Leg Deadlift:

Why:

If you aren't stable slow, you won't be stable fast.

This is a “more bang for your buck” exercise! Not only does this strengthen the hamstrings but also the muscles in your hips and feet. Plus, it's great for your balance!

How:

- Standing on both legs, shift your weight to the right leg.
- “Push” your left leg back while hinging through your right hip. Your nose should be over your right foot.
- Pause at the bottom to stop the motion, and reverse to standing.
- Perform 3 sets for 10-15 reps per leg.



EXERCISE 1

Romanian Deadlift:

Why:

If standing on one leg isn't your jam, try this variation for a killer hamstring exercise.

How:

- Keep your ribs locked onto your pelvis, breathe in and brace.
- Push your hips back like you're using your hips to shut a door. The weight stays against your legs throughout.
- Pause at the bottom to stop the motion, and reverse to standing.
- Perform 3 sets for 8-12 reps.
- This exercise gives you more stability which enables you to use heavier weights than the single leg version.

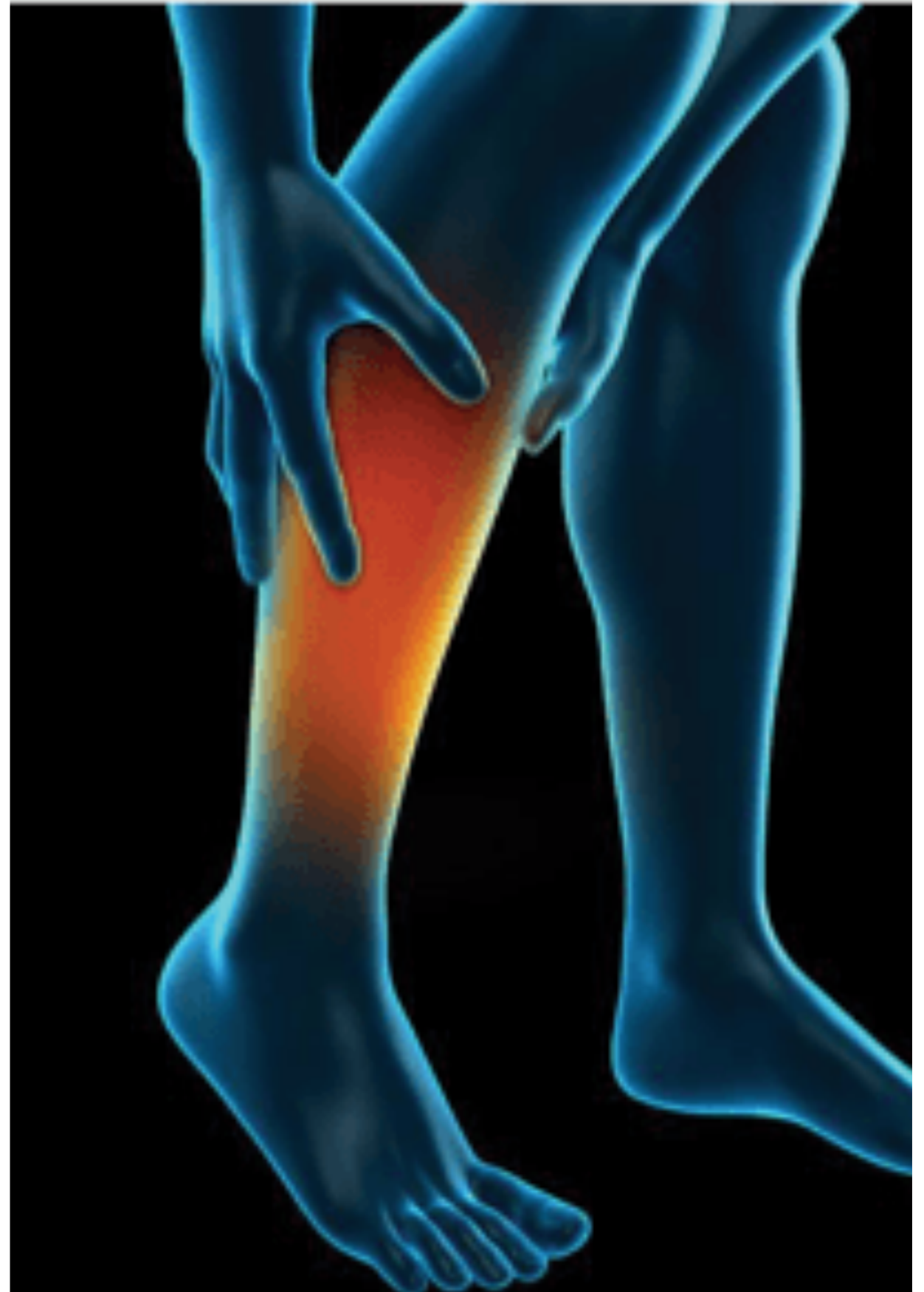


LESSON 2

The chances of lower leg and foot pain increases as we age. Why? Because our muscles get weaker and smaller each year if we aren't using them. This loss of muscle occurs quicker past the age of 40!

To keep your lower legs and feet strong, we need to strengthen them in ways other than running.

Calf raises are a great option! We'll show you our favorite variation that helps you ward off plantar fasciitis, achilles tendonitis, and other aches of the calf, ankle and foot.



EXERCISE 2

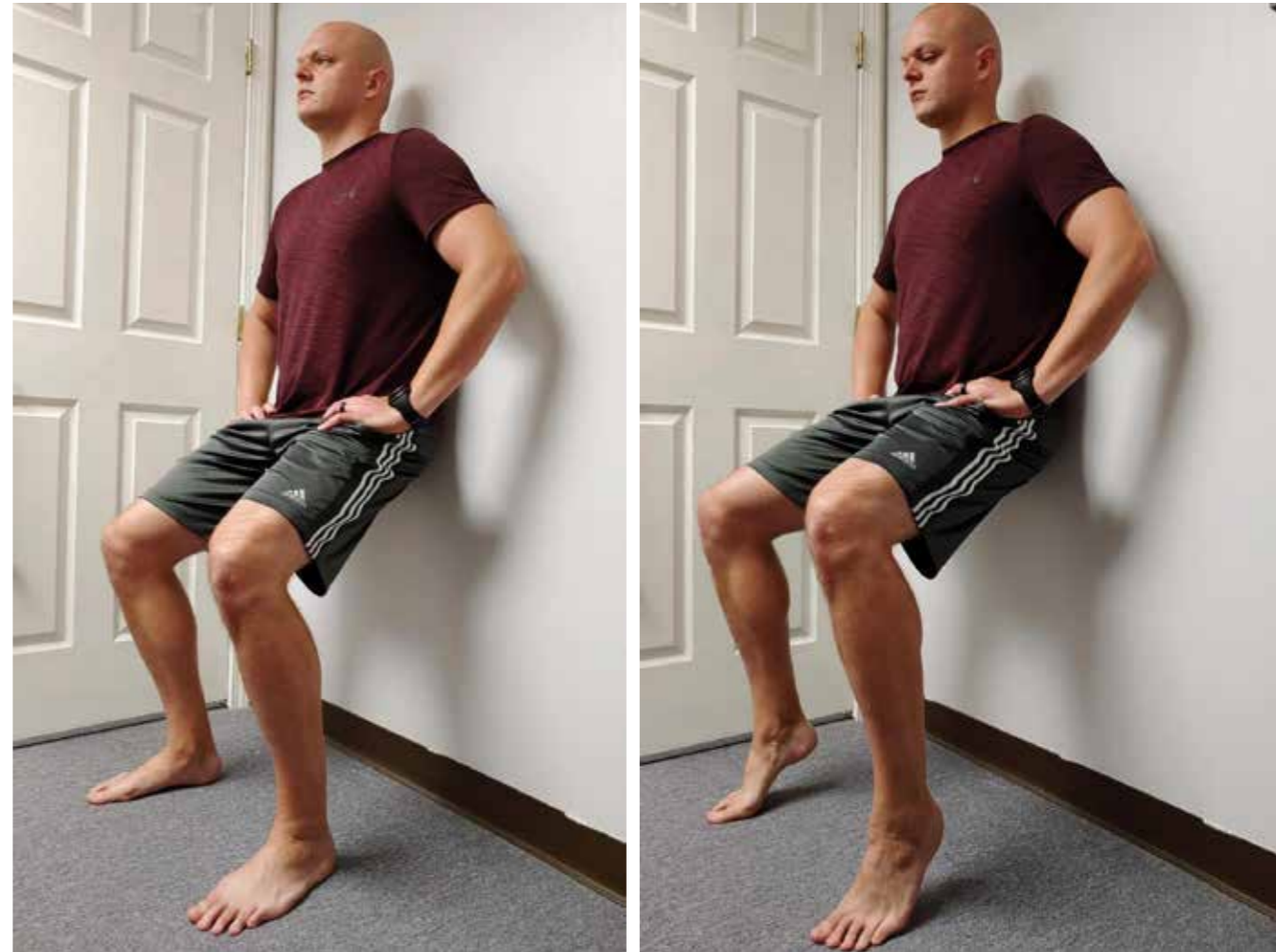
Wall Sit Calf Raises:

Why:

To “bullet proof” the muscles that move and support your lower leg, ankle and foot.

How:

- Sit against a wall in a 1/4 or 1/2 squat.
- Press your toes into the ground, and begin to raise your heel.
- As you raise up, continue pressing your toes into the ground and shift your weight from the 4 smaller toes to the big toe.
- Hold for 1 second. Slowly lower yourself back down keeping the weight on the big toe side of the foot.
- To increase difficulty, place a rolled up towel under the toes. (not pictured)
- Perform 2-3 sets of 25.



LESSON 3



Can you spread your toes? Or do they look like they're all squished together?

Toes shoved into shoes that are too tight, narrow, or small can cause issues like bunions, hammer toes, Morton's neuromas, metatarsalgia, plantar pain, and other problems.

Part of the solution is getting the correct shoe for your foot. Maybe you need a bigger shoe, or one with a larger space for your toes. Perhaps you need a different brand altogether.

EXERCISE 3

Toe Mobility:

Why:

Your toes are meant to spread during walking and running. Restoring their ability to move can help ease a lot of foot aches and pains.

How:

- Seated, cross one leg and use the opposite hand to spread the toes. (Ex. Left foot with the Right hand)
- Grasp the top of the foot with the other hand, and wiggle the hands opposite directions.
- For more intense mobility work, move the foot and ankle in different positions. (i.e. point the foot and toes up and down or side to side)
- Perform 30-60 seconds on each foot.



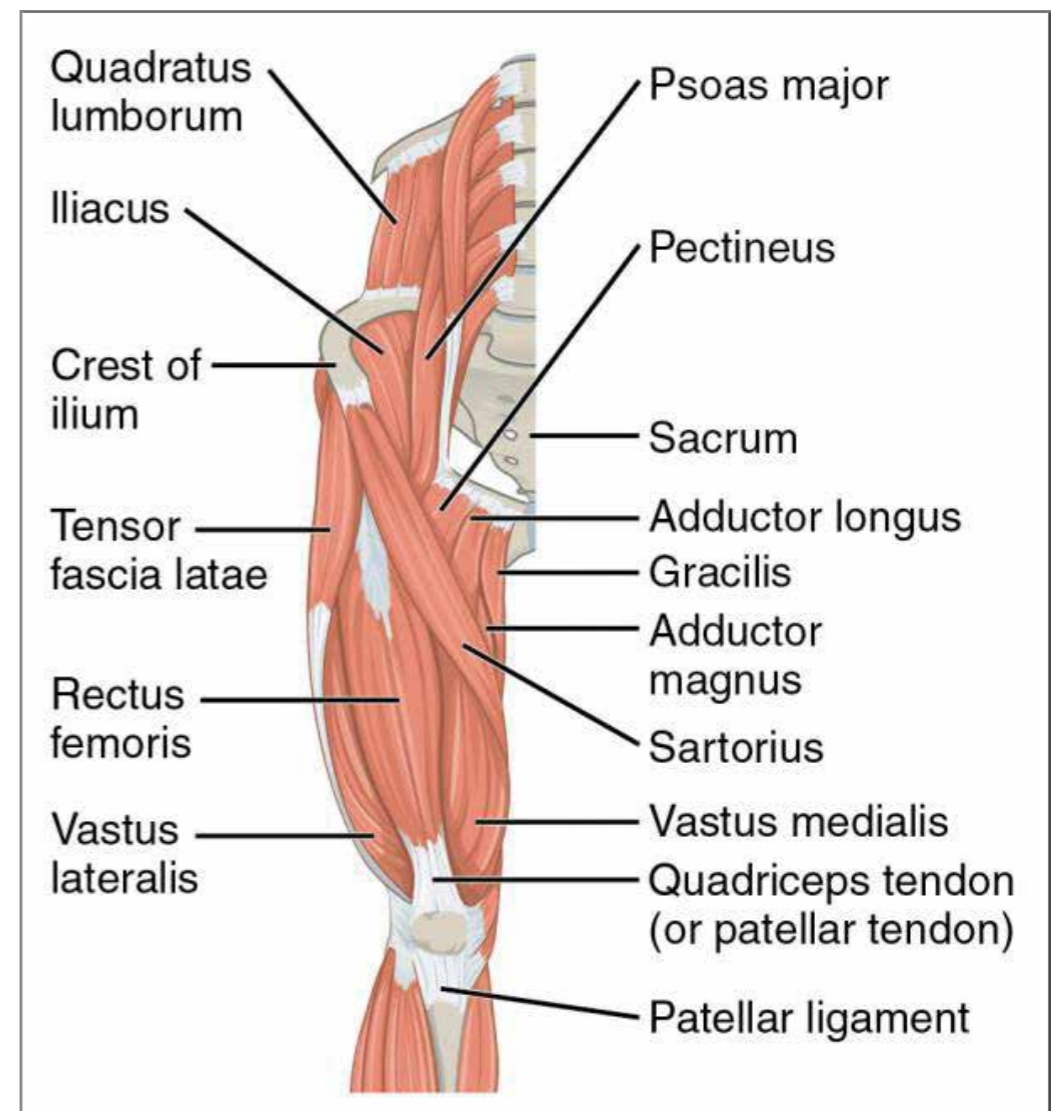
LESSON 4

“Groin pain is so much fun,” said no one ever!

The muscles of your inner thigh help the leg move in different directions, so it’s important to keep them strong!

Typical groin injuries occur with a sudden change in direction. For runners, these are more commonly injured when you misstep off a curb or into a hole.

Often, like the hamstrings, these muscles will loosen up when you make them stronger.



EXERCISE 4

Copenhagen Plank:

Why:

Studies have shown this to be one of the most effective exercises at preventing reoccurrence of groin pain in athletes.

How:

- Easier version: Place your top knee onto the bench.
- Lock your ribs to your pelvis, and keep your torso braced.
- Push your knee into the bench and use your inner thigh muscles to pull your body up.
- Hold for time or perform for reps.



EXERCISE 4

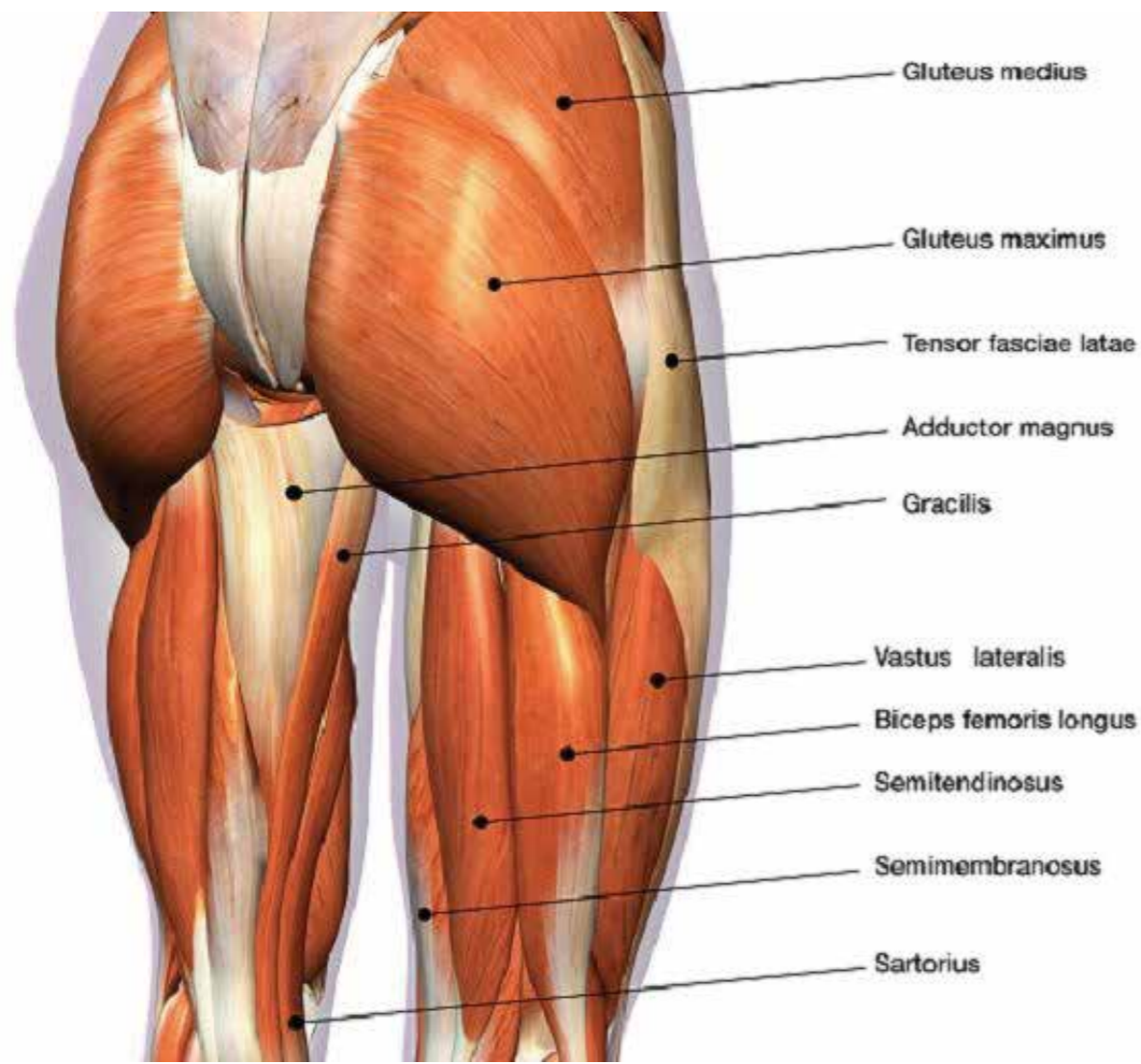
Copenhagen Plank:

Harder Version: Place your top foot onto the bench bracing yourself on the inner foot.

- Lock your ribs to your pelvis, and keep your torso braced.
- Push your foot into the bench and use your inner thigh muscles to pull your body up.
- Hold for time or perform for reps.



LESSON 5



Paraphrasing Shakira, your hips don't lie!

If you aren't in control of your body on one leg, (running is successive falling forward and landing on each leg) your body will react by tightening up your hips. This can lead to pain in the front, side or back of the hip. It can even be responsible for pain in your low back or knee!

Make yourself more awesome by taking back control of your hips!



EXERCISE 5

Hip Dominant Lunge:

Why:

Strength and endurance of your hip muscles will be very beneficial when it's time to increase the distance, cadence, tempo or frequency of your runs. Be ready!

How:

- Rib cage locked onto pelvis.
- Step one leg forward into a lunge position. Stop the knee from advancing forward by pushing back with that leg.
- Lower back leg down slowly and under control.
- Can return to starting position each time (return to standing), perform for unbroken reps, or perform each lunge walking forward with each rep.



PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Sample Workout:

I: Single Leg/Romanian Deadlift:

3 sets of 8-15 reps

II: Hip Dominant Lunge:

2-3 sets of 10-20 reps per leg

III: Wall Sit Calf Raises:

3 sets of 15-30 reps

IV: Copenhagen Plank:

3 sets of 30 seconds per leg

V: Toe Mobility:

30-60 seconds per foot

Compliments of:

KC Performance Chiropractic & Rehab

“Feel great so you can perform at your best!”

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