

How to treat specific muscles: low back

The paraspinal muscles

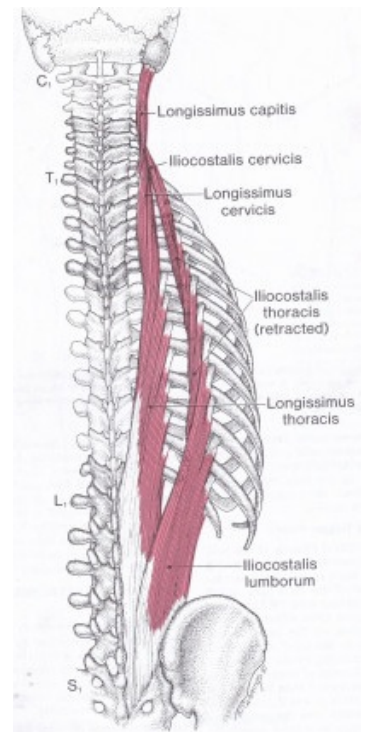
The first muscles we will look at are the muscles that run along each side of your spine called the paraspinal muscles. These are shown in this pic. You can have trigger points anywhere along these muscles.

One of the basic principles of doing any sort of massage or trigger point therapy is that you try and have the muscle you're working on relaxed. An easy way to do this for these muscles is to lay face down.

You can reach the muscles to examine them but it's not easy. The best way is to let the massager find the trigger points for you. Move the massager slowly and systematically along the muscles on each side of your spine, and if you find a part that feels a bit tight just sit the machine for 30-60 seconds while you feel the muscle relax.

If you have one of our quad head massagers it's even easier because you can move the machine along slowly with two heads on each side of your spine. Again if you find a part that's a bit tight or tender stop and let the vibrations soak in for 30-60 seconds.

Another alternative if you have one of our quad head massagers is to use it as a chair massager like in this pic.



The paraspinal muscles



Laying flat so muscle is relaxed with gravity applying pressure



Having the four heads it is easy to use it as a "massage cushion". Please don't put too much weight on it though.

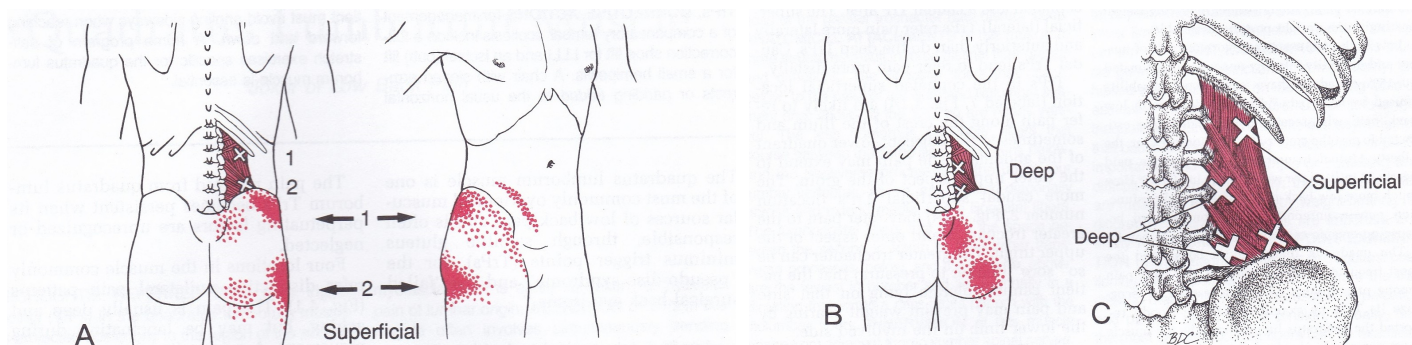
Quadratus Lumborum

The next muscles we'll look at are those deep muscles either side of your low back as you see in this pic called quadratus lumborum. In this pic the x's mark the common trigger points and the red is where they shoot pain.

Because they're so deep they're too difficult for a non professional to examine, but trigger points in these are so common you can assume that if you have any sort of back stiffness or pain you'll have them. When used reasonably therapeutic vibrations are very good for your muscles anyway I'd just give those muscles a good soak anyway.

These muscles are at the side of your spine between the top of your pelvis and the bottom of your ribs. To get the vibrations into the muscles you have the head of the massager about 6cm from your spine, angled down and towards your spine, working between your ribs and pelvis.

If you have one of our quad head massagers it's easy. It fits really nicely over that part of your spine so you can just sit the machine there and give your muscles a good soak, or you can do as I do each morning and sit the machine behind me on a chair.



Quadratus lumborum muscles with trigger points



Massager head about 6cm from spine, angled downwards towards the spine



If you have one of our quad head massagers, you can use two heads on each side of your spine.

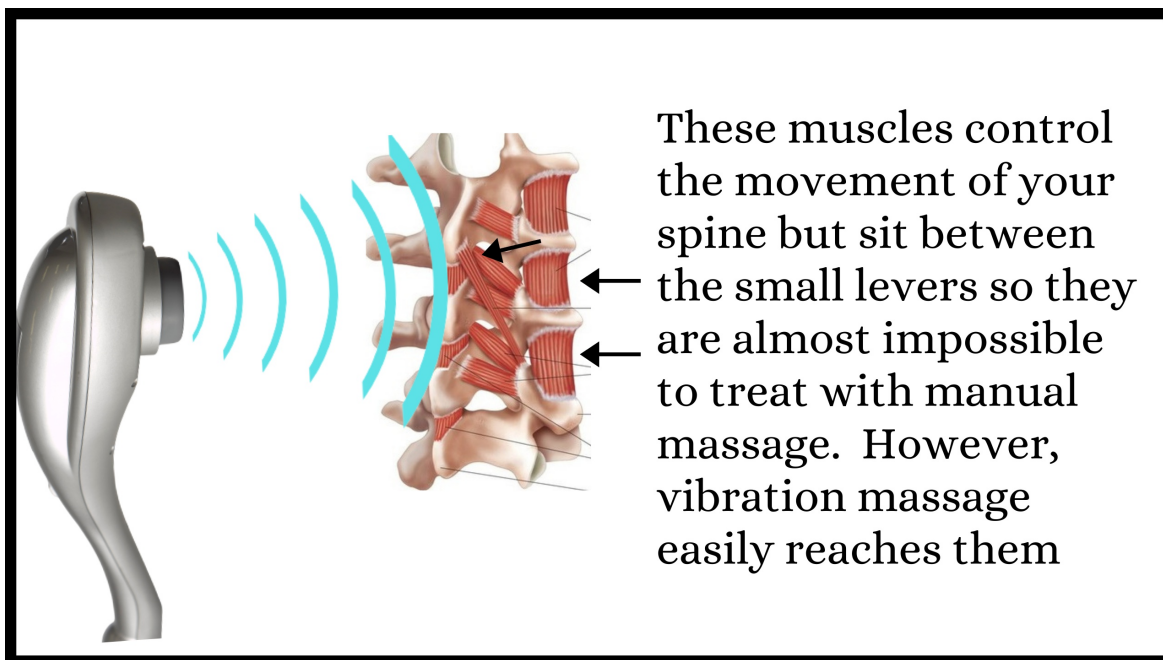
Intrinsic Muscles

While we're massaging in that general area I need to mention these muscles pictured. They're known as the intrinsic muscles of the spine. They sit very deep around your spine, usually in very tight spaces between bony levers.

From where they are you can see that these muscles have a very important role in positioning and moving the vertebrae, and if they're abnormally tight they'll to use non-technical terms lock the spine up and pull vertebrae out of place.

These muscles are incredibly important, but because of where they are conventional massage can't get to them. There's no way you can push your elbow or thumb in that deep between bony levers that may only be 1 cm apart. Massage guns cant drive their heads in there either, and you can't use needles because you'd end up sticking them into something like a nerve or your spinal cord.

The good news is that therapeutic vibrations can easily reach them. If a professional feels that there may be an issue with one of the vertebrae he or she might give the muscles a but of extra attention. But all the time you're massaging the paraspinal muscles and quadratus lumborum muscles the vibrations will be soaking into these too.



The Glutes

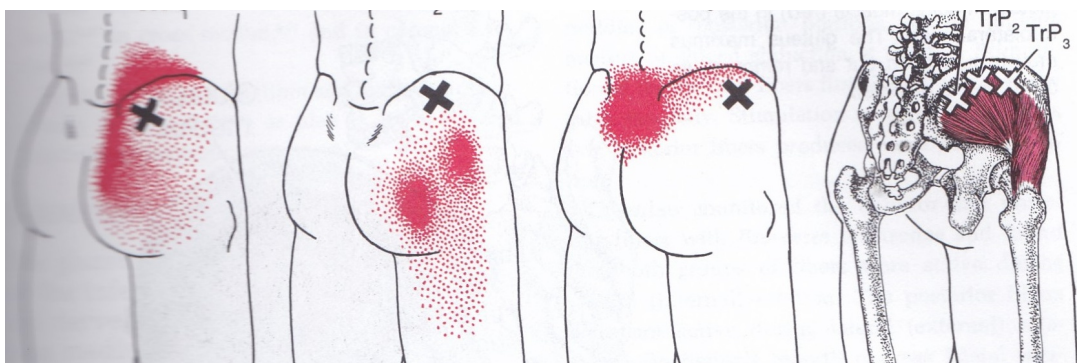
The next muscle we'll do are the glutes, that make up your your buttocks. There are several of them, and they go from the side of your pelvis around to your tail bone, and go from near the surface to quite deep.

You can reach these to examine them, but its a bit hard to feel the deep ones if you're not a professional and very experienced, so what I'd recommend you do go over the muscles systematically and give them all a good soak.

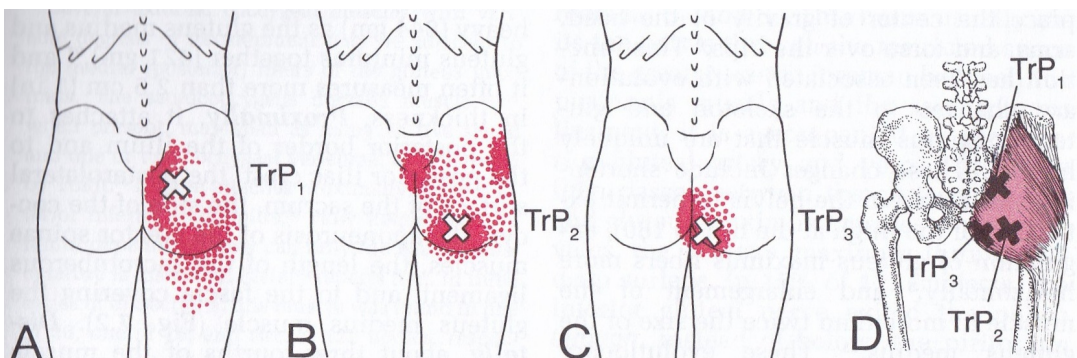
When you use a vibration massager its good to have the part you're massaging horizontal. That way you don't have to support the weight of the machine, and the weight of the machine applies the pressure you need. To can lay side on to get the muscles around the side of your pelvis, and roll gradually forward to get the ones further towards the back. You can also use your fingers to examine as deeply as you can do comfortably, and if you find part that's a bit tight or tender give it a bit of extra treatment.

Another thing I need to mention is you only massage muscle. If you go down the side a bit you'll feel your hip bone, and as you go around the back your tail bone. You don't massage these.

If you have a single head massager like one of our General Purpose Massagers you can work specifically, but if you have one of our quad head massagers you can cover them all with two applications: one at the side and one further around the back.



Glute Medius muscle with trigger points



Glute Maximus muscle with trigger points

The Glues (cont.)



Lay side on to make it easy to massage the glutes towards the side of your pelvis



Roll forward to make it easier to massage the muscles towards your "tail bone"



The quad head massager will cover most of the glutes towards your side



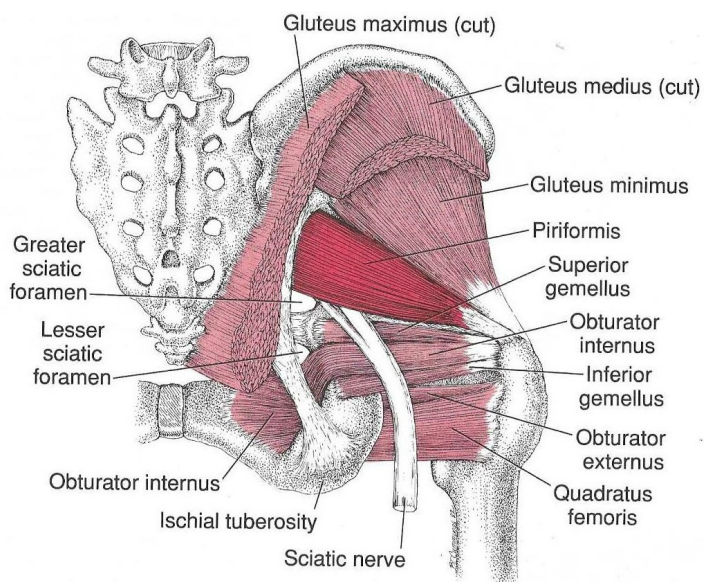
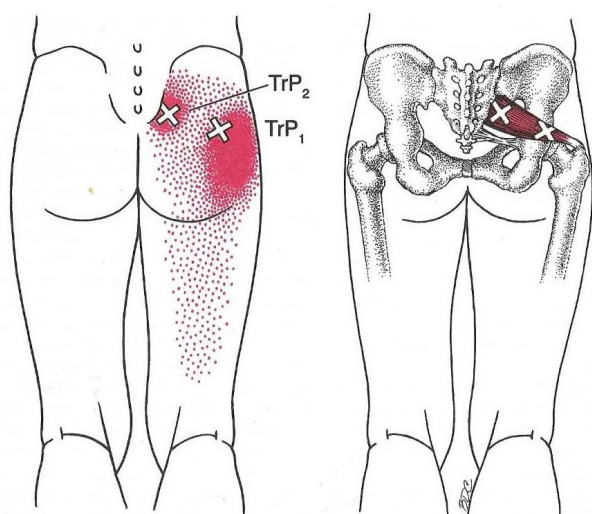
The quad head massager will cover most of the glutes towards your side

Piriformis and other deep hip muscles

The next muscles we'll do are the ones that sit deep around your hip. There's one called Piriformis that has a syndrome named after it, plus a heap of others most people have never heard of.

There's a picture of them here, looking from behind with the glute muscles removed, and this picture shows one of them with the trigger points and where they shoot pain.

These very often have trigger points and are a big cause of back pain and stiffness. They're too deep for anyone but an experience professional to examine, so what I recommend is you find a spot in the middle of your glutes where the muscles feel really deep, put the massager on for a couple of minutes, and give them a really good soaking. The vibrations have to go through the glutes to get them, but a bit extra for them is just a bit of extra good.



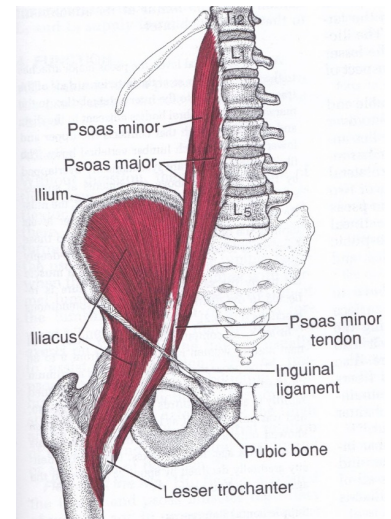
Apply massager to the deepest part of your buttock muscles



The quad head massager will thoroughly cover many muscles

Psoas muscles

the last muscles we'll look at are the psoas and iliacus muscles. As you can see from this diagram they sit beneath your abdomen. There are way to many sensitive structures sitting over these, so we'll leave them to the professionals.



Other self massage and trigger point therapy articles

If you found this useful please check out our other self massage and trigger point therapy articles.

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- [Massage And Trigger Point Therapy For Calf Pain, With Self Help Options](#)
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