

## Sore Back: A Pain in the Ass? by Brad Surette, BA, RMT

Ok, so while proper massage therapy terminology would most likely make reference to the gluteus maximus, that doesn't exactly roll off the tongue now does it? And I guess I could have used the word "buttocks" but I hate that word. It always comes out with me sounding like I'm trying to pull off a British accent. Regardless, I like the title of this article because not only has it gotten your attention (I know this because you're still reading) but it also addresses a very important point.

Sometimes low back discomfort can actually be caused by pain originating from a trigger point in your derriere. Suddenly, I feel French. I may as well try out all the accents today. Pourquoi pas?

Anyway, it can be said that the characteristic trait of a sweet little trigger point is that referral pain is most often felt elsewhere in the body. A client may report feeling pressure where the therapist is applying an ischemic compression AND notice a shooting pain in another area.

If you've been experiencing pain for years with no resolve, all is not lost. Registered Massage Therapists are trained to find the root of your pain and also know the key places to treat besides the indicated area of discomfort.

For example, did you know that trigger points in the piriformis muscle can cause referral pain in the hips?

Likewise, trigger points in the glutes (gluteus muscles) can

pull on the pelvic crest putting strain on the QL muscles (quadratus lumborum) in your lower back.

Sometimes a thorough massage therapy treatment for back pain will include addressing tightness (hypertonicity) in other regions besides the back, i.e, the glutes, the piriformis, or even hamstring muscles.

In designing the most effective treatment plan possible, your RMT will consider all of these possibilities as well as treat any muscles that are compensating.

So, make sure you mention all areas of discomfort to your RMT even if you don't think it seems related. It very well could be the root of your problem. - Brad Surette, BA, RMT