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Understanding and Managing Groin Pain: A Self-Care Guide

Groin pain can be frustrating to treat because it involves several interconnected muscular and joint systems. While many people assume groin pain is referred from the low back, it's often directly related to specific muscles in the pelvis, abdomen, and thigh. Understanding these relationships can help you manage your symptoms effectively.

If groin pain has a muscular component, it generally comes from trigger points in these areas:

1. The inner thigh muscles that pull your legs together
2. The deep hip flexor muscles that connect your spine to your thigh bone
3. The lower abdominal muscles

The Connection Between Trigger Points and Acupuncture

Trigger points are small, sensitive areas in your muscles that can cause pain both at the point itself and in other areas of your body (referred pain). These points often correspond with traditional acupuncture points, which isn't surprising given our growing understanding of how the body's myofascial (muscle and connective tissue) system overlaps with traditional acupuncture meridians. When you apply pressure to these points, you stimulate the same nerve fibers that respond to acupuncture needles, making self-massage a powerful tool for home care.

Getting Started with Self-Massage

The key to effective self-massage is gentle, sustained pressure rather than aggressive rubbing. You'll need a massage ball - while a tennis ball works to start, I recommend the Yoga Tune Up therapy balls for their durability and perfect density. When working on a point:

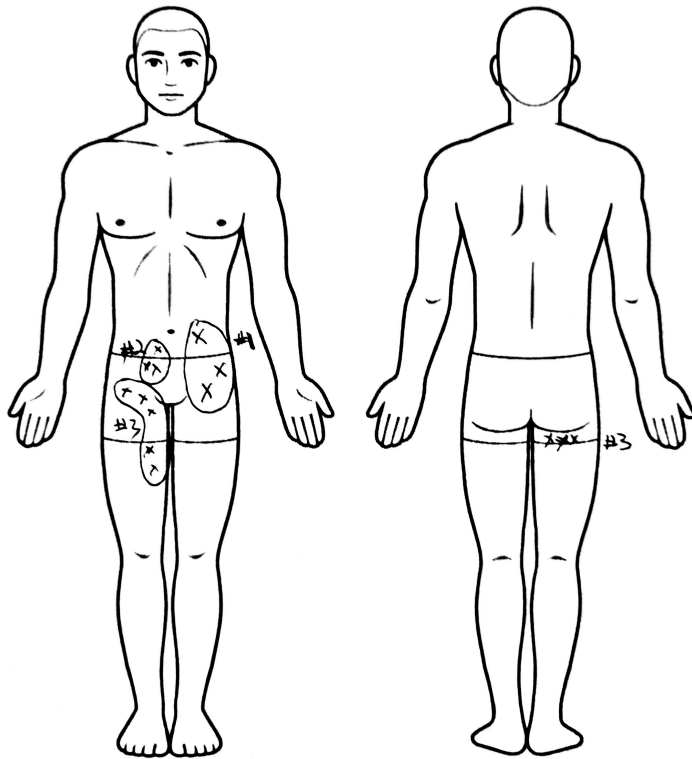
- Start with light pressure and gradually increase as the tissue releases
- If you find yourself holding your breath, that's a sign you're using too much pressure
- Spend no more than a couple of minutes on each area.
- Repeat every 2-3 days
- If you experience any nerve sensations (tingling, numbness, or sharp pain), adjust the position of the ball

Key Areas to Address

The inner thigh muscles are in a sensitive area, so are often best massaged with supported fingers. Some of the points are easier to access while standing, others while lying down. The one exception is a spot at the very top of the thigh near the sit bone. This point can be massaged by sitting on a massage ball on a hard chair.

The deep hip flexors and the abdominal muscles are best approached with a soft "Coregous" ball available through Yoga Tune Up. I've included a couple of video links to get you started.

See the illustration below for help locating these common trigger points. Click the links below for helpful videos on rolling out your hip flexors and abdominal muscles. If you're currently working with me for acupuncture, I'll go over this at your next appointment.



#1 Hip Flexors

#2 Abdominal Muscles

#3 Adductors—I like to massage these either with supported fingers while standing or lying in bed. Another good option is to stack different sizes of YTU balls on top of 1 or 2 yoga blocks in order to roll along the inner thigh.