



Sharon A. Vallone, DC, FICCP
379 Crystal Lake Road Tolland, CT 06084

Making the decision to have a child - it's momentous. It is to decide forever to have your heart go walking outside your body. ~Elizabeth Stone

The Lunge Stretch—Advanced

This is the most important stretch for your low back. It stretches the Psoas muscle (often known as the groin muscle). The Psoas is a major low back muscle that originates from the front side of the lower spine and inserts into the Femur at the top of your thigh. It's job is to lift the leg but more importantly, it acts as a major core stabilizer when we are in an upright posture.



Stage 1— The Lunge Stretch Assisted by a Physioball

A physioball is a special ball made to handle the weight of an adult. It should be inflated with a bit of give— just less than hard. The ball allows for a slightly unstable and mobile sitting surface that exercises both the large and small muscles. It is a wonderful “chair” to sit while working, eating or just watching tv. It allows you to get exercise while you sit!

In this exercise you will sit on the physioball as shown in the photo and gently rock forward onto the bent knee to stretch the psoas in the groin area of the leg to the rear. Do both legs.

Stage 2— The Lunge Stretch Unassisted



To start, get in the position shown. With the front leg perpendicular to the floor, push your back leg as far back as you can without moving the front leg. You then stretch by lunging forward at the waist while keeping your back leg stationary. If you don't feel a pull in this area, you probably don't have the back leg stretched back far enough.

This is not a feel-good stretch when the muscle is tight or inflamed; you will get a burning sensation in the groin. You can relieve some of this discomfort by contracting the Psoas of the back leg as if you were going to bring that leg forward (you essentially push your knee into the floor in an isometric contraction for just a few seconds). Then relax it; the pain in the muscle should be less; then go a little deeper into the stretch and follow the same process. Spend at least a minute in the stretch before slowly backing out of it. Try to use the power of your brain to relax