

# Stretching the Thigh Muscle

The quadriceps (thigh muscle) is the large muscle at the front of the thigh which is made up of four individual muscles. At the upper end, three of these muscles attach to the thigh bone. The longest muscle (Rectus Femoris) attaches to the pelvis. At the lower end, all four muscles come together at the knee cap and continue as a thick tendon to the top of the shin bone (**Figure 1**).

The quadriceps straightens the knee. You use this muscle, for example, in running and jumping, kicking a ball, and going up and down stairs.

If the quadriceps is tight there may be knee pain, and it may be difficult to bend the knee.

This may interfere with activities such as playing sport, prolonged sitting, and bending the knees to squat.

Your quadriceps muscle is tight – see instructions below for the recommended daily quadriceps stretch.

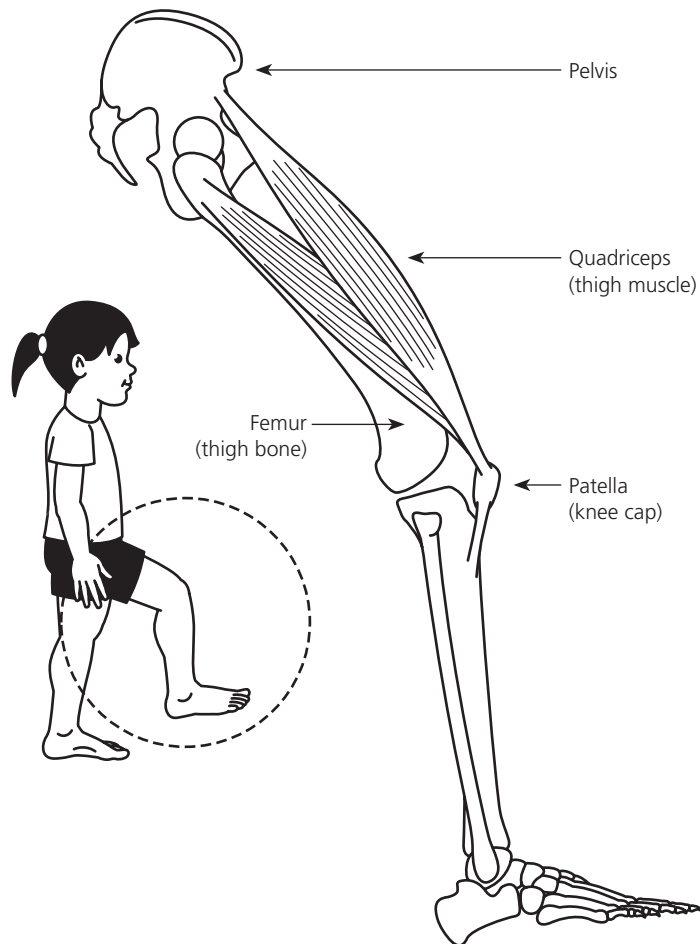
## Standing quadriceps (thigh) stretch

Stand upright with a chair to one side for balance. Pull right/left heel towards buttock until a gentle stretch is felt in the front of the thigh.

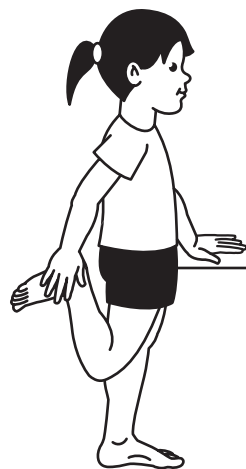
Hold for 30 seconds, then repeat twice (**Figure 2**).

Change your starting position to stretch the other leg.

**Note:** All exercise should be pain free or with minimum discomfort only. If there is difficulty or concern please discontinue and contact the physiotherapist.



**Figure 1.** Anatomy of the upper leg.



**Figure 2.** Standing thigh stretch.