

Riding Wide-Back Horses

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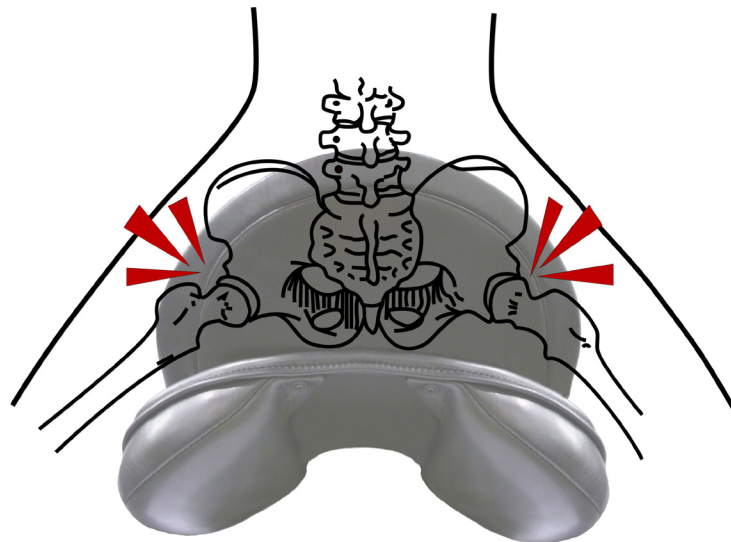
Question: How can I avoid feeling 'pulled apart' when riding my wide-backed horse?

ANSWER:

The twist of the saddle is crucial in determining this type of issue coming up. Because of the female pelvic structure and our muscles, most women will need a fairly narrow, upside-down u shaped twist. The twist is defined as being that part of the tree that you will feel between your upper inner thighs. Because of the way our muscles (quads and hamstrings) are – very round – there is less space in the upper inner thigh area than for a man – where these same muscles are much flatter and more at the front and back than at the sides. Our hip bones are articulated differently, which also leads to issues of hip pain depending on the seat of the saddle.

Especially prevalent among dressage riders, it is important to have a saddle that accommodates the female anatomy because you are sitting in the saddle pretty much all the time except in posting trot.

It is the bottom of the saddle (the panel and gullet) which is made to fit the horse's back – and you can have both if you have a saddle maker who knows what he is doing and takes both horse and rider into consideration. You can absolutely have a wide-backed horse that will not impact the rider's anatomical requirements if the saddler is involved in the design from the get go.



Hip pain can result when the twist of the saddle is too wide for the rider.

Jochen Schleese, German Certified Master Saddler and Saddle Ergonomist, teaches saddle fit principles to protect horse and rider from long-term damage caused by ill-fitting saddles. www.saddlefit4life.com 702-370-1199 info@saddlefit4life.com www.saddlesforwomen.com



Female (left): muscle conformation looks rounder when viewed from the front and does not leave much space between the upper inner thighs; Male (right) muscles of the quadriceps and hamstrings are more defined on the front and back of the femur (less on the sides) leaving more room between the upper inner thighs.