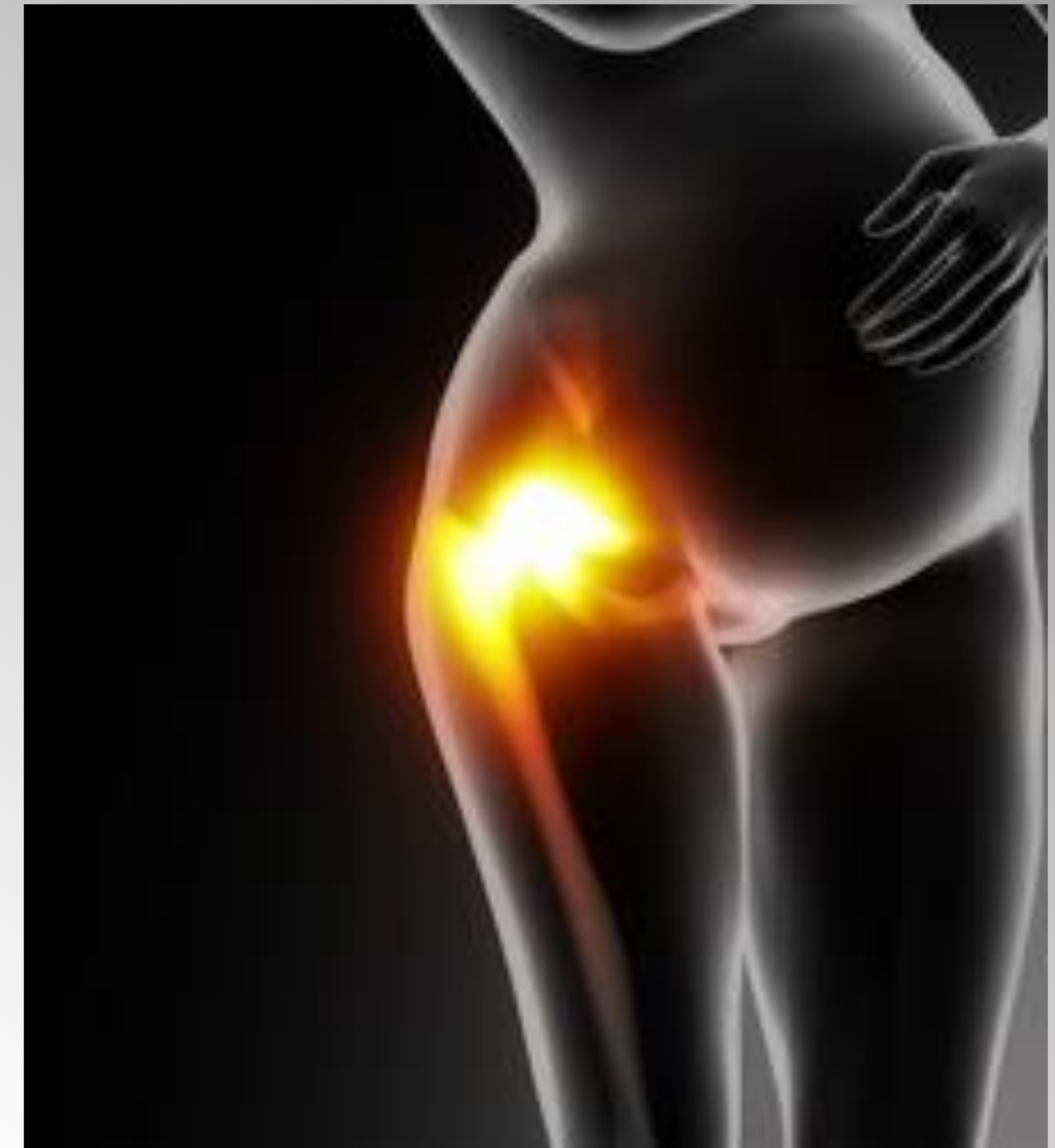


The Outlier: A Case of Postpartum Piriformis Muscle Spasm

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- Postpartum low back pain (LBP) is a common occurrence for new mothers.
- Pain intensity can vary from mild to debilitating.
- Potential etiologies are vast:
 - Stress of labor
 - Biomechanical and hormonal changes
 - Physical demands of motherhood
 - Infection of bones/tissues



Case Presentation

- 37 y/o G8P0 at 37+3, scheduled cesarean delivery under spinal anesthesia
 - Morbid obesity (BMI 51)
 - PMH sig. for recurrent pregnancy loss, PCOS, previous myomectomy, HTN, IIH
- POD # 2, patient complained of swelling and tightness to right lower back and buttock which progressed through the evening to include radiation to the lateral/posterior knee
- Workup including thorough physical exam and lower extremity doppler unrevealing
- Patient was started on cyclobenzaprine for possible piriformis muscle spasm
 - Continued monitoring for signs/symptoms of epidural complications
- Discharged on POD 4 reporting complete resolution of symptoms

Discussion

- Piriformis syndrome is a known cause of LBP and sciatica resulting from entrapment of the sciatic nerve.
- Anatomical changes of pregnancy result in elongation and straining of the gluteal muscle group, especially deep, small muscles such as the piriformis.
- Frequently underdiagnosed in the obstetric population
 - Should be suspected with symptoms of hip or sciatic pain, especially after delivery
 - Appropriate assessment should be performed to rule out more sinister causes of LBP
- Treatment involves medications to reduce symptoms and physical therapy.

