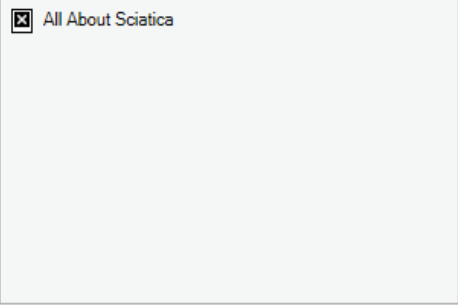


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# All About Sciatica

What is Sciatica? *Sciatica* is a medical term used to explain symptoms that develop when the Sciatic nerve is compromised. Pseudo sciatica, which is the most common, occurs when the sciatic nerve is compressed by the Piriformis (bum) muscle. True sciatica occurs when one of the sciatic nerve roots is compressed when it exits the spinal column.



If you aren't able to get in to the chiropractor or physical therapist right away or you hope to help improve your situation at least in part on your own, here are some tips to help relieve the pain associated with sciatica.

**Reason #3:** Most people fail to remove their back pain and sciatica because they believe that to do so is too hard, too laborious, or too time consuming. You may also believe that unless you see results in a few minutes that things are not working.

To understand and defeat the beast that is sciatica, it will be helpful to understand what it is and what causes it. The sciatic nerve is the largest nerve in your body, which starts in the low back and travels all the way down your legs to the bottom of your feet. It controls nearly everything within your legs: from the large hamstring and quadriceps muscles in your upper legs to the smallest blood vessels in the bottom of your feet.

**Common Sciatica Treatments Bed Rest** The most common sciatica treatment suggested by doctors is bed rest. It helps in relieving pain. However, only taking bed rest is not going to solve the problem fully. You should combine rest with physical activity that is enough to keep you active without aggravating the pain.

Even if you end up seeking professional help to deal with sciatica, incorporating practical home care can help shorten your recovery time and get you out of pain quicker. If pain in your buttocks and legs is something that you would rather avoid than deal with again, use these tips regularly to give yourself the best chance of preventing sciatica for years to come.

**How is Sciatica caused?** Pseudo Sciatica is caused by a tightening of the Piriformis muscle on the Sciatic nerve. The nerve passes under the Piriformis muscle and in some cases it passes right through the muscle tissue. Exercise, pregnancy, weight gain and posture can create a tight Piriformis muscle.

**Sciatica** is quite simply irritation of the sciatic nerve. This can happen several different ways at a few different points in the nerve's journey from the low back to and through the leg.

**Steroid Based Treatments** Sometimes, the doctors also prescribe epidural or corticosteroid steroid injections to help reduce inflammation in the effected areas.

**Sciatica Treatment At Home** There are many home based **sciatica** treatment too. Some of them are very effective in curing your sciatica pain quickly. For example ice treatment is very effective in controlling sciatica pain if it is used with in 48 hours of the onset of pain. Movement is also a good option in reducing pain. Doing exercises that stretch piriformis muscles are helpful in controlling sciatica pain. Balancing your pelvis region properly also helps in controlling pain. You can do this by lying down on the bed to check whether the balance is properly distributed on both sides.

If you have had your sciatica for over a month (yes it only takes 31 days to form a habit) then your body believes it is perfectly normal to have sciatica and back pain. To remove your back pain and sciatica, you need to change these habits. The big question is how?

Therefore to change habits you need to use techniques your self, consistently, repeatedly at home to change habits. For sciatica and back pain to disappear once and for all, you need to learn ways to help your self.

You also have emotional stress, general health, and fatigue levels that are just as important. To have a complete and permanent relief from *sciatica* and back pain, you need to address all these areas. Which leads you to reason number 3...

Get professional help. It is always a good idea to seek help from a chiropractor, medical doctor, physical therapist or massage therapist when you experience pain in the low back and/or legs. Waiting too long to effectively treat a condition involving your nerves can cause problems as mild as missing time from work all the way up to irreversible nerve damage. It is wise to effectively and completely deal with any problems involving your nerves, as doing so will help prevent similar problems from rearing their ugly head again down the road.

True Sciatica responds extremely well to spinal decompression treatments. This is performed on a special table. The treatment schedule depends on your specific symptoms and cause. What needs to be done with disk bulges/herniations is that the disk material needs to be absorbed back into the disk and this requires taking the pressure off the disk. This is why spinal decompression is so effective. It is essentially traction targeted to your specific condition.

**Who is right and who is wrong.** In fact they are all right and all wrong. Back pain and especially sciatica is a combination of factors. Tight muscles, weak muscles, joints not moving correctly and inflammation - these all create your pain.

**Surgery** Surgery also brings relief to patients. Surgery is performed when the pain does not subside even after rest, medications or other forms of treatment and the nerve compression leads to other problems like extreme weakness and bladder incontinence etc

Frequently sciatic nerve pain is a result of the joints in your lower spine being poorly aligned and putting pressure or stretching on the nerves as they come off from your spine. This problem is called a subluxation and is diagnosed and treated by chiropractors. Sciatica can also commonly occur due to spasm of a muscle in the buttock called the piriformis muscle. The sciatic nerve passes under this muscle as it travels through the pelvis near the hip down to the back of your leg. This problem is frequently treated by physical therapists, chiropractors and massage therapists.

If after 4-5 days you choose to alternate ice and heat, keep it off from the spine and limit heat use, especially with a heating pad, to no more than 20 minutes. Avoid sleeping while applying heat, as it can cause burns and can dry out the tissues, slowing the healing process.

**Reason #2:** Most sciatica and back pain treatments fail as they only address one aspect of your problem. You will see some practitioners, and many internet sites, saying your problem is due to muscles. Then other will say it is joints. Then more who say it is inflamed tissues. And so on.

Sciatica can reduce your mobility and normal daily activities considerably. The duration of the pain varies according to the inherent cause and may subside in 4-8 weeks time. However, there is no need to loose hope. There are many *sciatica* treatments both clinical and home based which can help cure and manage sciatica and reduce pain.

??<http://everesttherapeutics.com/downtown-vancouver/vancouver-massage/all-about-sciatica.html>

About the Author:

Having only 2% of his vision left due to a progressive retinal degenerative condition, Mark felt a profession based on touch and not sight would allow him to provide the best service to society. It was an important decision in Mark's life that has been justified many times over since graduating from the West Coast College of Massage Therapy in 1995. Having weakness in one sense allows the brain to provide more power to other senses, for example, touch and intention. This is a great advantage that allows Mark to function at a heightened state of awareness when treating the body. Combining this with his knowledge in human movement patterns makes for a unique and powerful massage therapy experience. For the past 7 years, Mark has also worked on a political level with our Provincial, National and International massage therapy organizations. Mark is joined by his seeing-eye dog Victor. Victor is a 3 year old Labrador/Retriever. Clients love to see the 90 pound bundle of love and joy when they come into the clinic.  
<http://everesttherapeutics.com>  
[www.electrahealthfloor.com](http://www.electrahealthfloor.com)

**Stretch yourself.** Relaxing the muscles in the lower back, buttocks and upper legs through stretching will help reduce the strain on the sciatic nerve and the joints throughout the lower back and pelvis. Always stretch gently and avoid any further stretching if it causes sharp pain or if it aggravates your problem.

Stretching the piriformis muscle can be done several different ways. However, when your sciatic nerve is screaming, the easiest stretch involves lying on your back with your knees bent and pulling one knee at a time up towards the opposite shoulder and holding it for 5-30 seconds. You will know you are getting a good stretch when you feel a mild stretch in the buttocks near the hip.

Take a break from your regular exercise routine to give your sciatic nerve a break. If you simply must exercise, try non-impact exercises of the upper body, like resistive exercise band exercise or exercise ball exercises. Swimming may be a helpful alternative to your regular routine as well.

*Sciatica* occurs due to the compression at the base of the spine. This compression leads to pain in the lower back and gluetal region of the body. This pain travels to ankle, calf, thighs and knee. Real *Sciatica* happens when the pain reaches the knees and the ankles. Sciatica actually is the pain that moves through the sciatic nerve - the longest nerve in your body. This nerve starts from your spinal cord to your hips and down to the leg. The pain therefore moves along this nerve and the parts of body it connects. **Sciatica** actually may not be problem in itself. It may have other inherent causes which are connected to the sciatic nerve like herniated disk.

Have you ever experienced a literal pain in the butt that continues all the way down your leg? Has it ever felt like someone was sticking a hot poker into your leg? If either of these scenarios is familiar to you, you've probably suffered from sciatica, a pain in the sciatic nerve. No one experiencing sciatica wants it to stick around any longer than, well, at all, so let's not delay in discovering how you can make your leg pain a distant memory.

**Alternative Sciatica Treatment** Many alternative *sciatica* treatments like yoga, acupuncture, acu-pressure and biofeedback therapy also exist. These alternative treatments are very effective in curing your sciatica problem.

Put on some relief. Topical analgesics can help alleviate some of the bite of the pain of *sciatica* while helping soothe the spasm in the muscles of the low back, buttocks and upper leg. Getting even temporary relief from your sciatica can help your healing process by providing you an opportunity to rest or sleep.

You then decide to stop using the techniques and fail to consistently change the habits that cause your back pain or sciatica. Reason #1 again. In reality, to change the habits, to correct the structural and general/emotional causes of your sciatica and back pain need only take a few minutes each day to apply.

Here goes... Reason #1: Your sciatica remains for the primary reason of habit. No you don't have habits that you must change like your posture or how you lift. Habit relates to the internal mechanisms of your body. Habits form because of consistent and repetitive acts.

True sciatica is caused from a variety of conditions: disk bulging or herniation, Degenerative Disk Disease (DDD), spinal stenosis and pregnancy. How to test for Sciatica

Symptoms of *Sciatica* Regardless of the type of *Sciatica* you have the symptoms are the same. These symptoms include but are not limited to pain in the low back, buttocks and down the back of the leg. Numbness and tingling are also common symptoms and they follow the same pathway. Weakness can develop anywhere along this pathway because there is an interruption in the sciatic nerve transmission.

Dr Graeme Teague is an expert in the structural field, and has been in practice since 1991. His newly launched web site The Back Pain Advisor - <http://www.back-pain-advisor.com> - strives to give you valuable and expert advice, tips and information on your back pain issues.

Did you know there are 3 simple reasons why your sciatica and back pain remain? Would you like to understand what these are so you can be finally free from your debilitating back pain? You may even be surprised to find that you can change most of these your self.

It is not strength of will or courage that wins the day... it is consistency. A famous quote from Winston Churchill about winning World War 2. It can be applied to winning your war against sciatica and back pain. Learn to consistently target the areas causing your back pain and sciatica then... it will disappear once and for all.

There are a variety of tests used to diagnose this condition. The first step is to go through a history of symptoms and activities with the client. Muscle and neurological tests are then done. An Xray, CT Scan or MRI might be needed depending on the initial findings.

For more information on Sciatica issues just visit Sciatica - <http://www.back-pain-advisor.com/sciatica.html>

For expert advice, tips and techniques to eliminate back pain visit Back Pain Advice

Treatment from a practitioner will not change habits. Why? It takes 31 days to change a habit. Do you know of any practitioner that does (or willing to) work 31 days in a row? Probably not.

Sciatica... you know the pain that travels down your leg and makes life so horrible at times. Your back pain is affecting your life; you can't do so many activities you once could. You may have sought treatment from many different practitioners, you may even have purchased many products off the internet... but your sciatica remains.

In most people, the sciatic nerve runs under the Piriformis (bum) muscle, which moves your thigh side to side. From there, the sciatic nerve descends through the buttocks and the back of the thighs. Behind your knee, smaller nerves branch out from the sciatic nerve and travel down to your feet.

Chill out. Ice will be your best friend when you are suffering from *sciatica*. Placing a cold pack or ice pack on the lower spine, tailbone and/or buttock for 20 minutes once every 2-3 hours will help reduce swelling and also reduce pain. It is important to use ice exclusively at the onset of sciatica, as it has been found to decrease the length of time needed for healing.

These sciatica treatments can help in curing and reducing your sciatica pain.

About the Author:

For more info on **sciatica** treatment head to: <http://www.sciaticatreatment.org> today!

Go for a massage. It stands to reason that if your sciatica is due to irritation of the sciatic nerve from spasm of your piriformis, hamstring or lower back muscles, deep tissue massage can be of great benefit to you. Getting a massage or even using a massager at home that is able to get into the deeper tissues of the buttocks and low back may help relieve some or all of your sciatic pain. At the very least, it can help to reduce the stress that commonly accumulates when you are in pain.

Get some sleep. Sleep is one of the most critical components in helping start and in maintaining a healing process. When you sleep, your body does its best work of healing and repairs the damage done throughout the day. Following any injury or during any illness, regular sleep is critical in helping your body get the upper hand.

**Anatomy of Sciatica** The sciatic nerve is the longest and largest nerve in your body. Five sets of paired nerve roots combine to create it, and it's about the diameter of your middle finger. The sciatic nerve starts in your low back, which is called your lumbar spine. The nerve roots are at the L4 and L5 vertebrae (the 'L' means lumbar, and the numbers indicate the level of the vertebra where it is in your back). The sciatic nerve also travels through your pelvic region (sacrum).

Drink like a fish. To drink like a fish, you need to drink what a fish drinks: water, lots and lots of water. When your body isn't hydrated properly, the tissues become tacky and adhesions form. If adhesions form, this slows the healing process and causes increased scar formation. Adhesions can form between your sciatic nerve and the surrounding tissues, causing your healing process to be incomplete and leaving you vulnerable to frequent, repeated sciatic episodes.

Give it a rest. Exercise is a great asset to getting and staying healthy, but when your sciatic nerve is unhappy, exercise will frequently flare up your problem and slow your progress. Especially if the piriformis muscle is involved, exercise which causes pounding, such as walking, running, tennis, basketball, soccer, etc., will flare the piriformis spasm and put additional strain on the spine in the lower part of the back.

**How to Treat Sciatica** Pseudo Sciatica is easily treated??????? by massage therapy. Usually in one treatment you will notice a dramatic improvement in your symptoms. Some home care exercises are prescribed and if you follow them you should have no more symptoms.

**Exercise** After the reduction in pain, doctors suggest exercises and physiotherapy to avoid the recurrence of the problem. These exercises are mainly aimed at improving your mobility, rectifying your posture and in making the muscles around your lower back strong.

**Medicines** The pain can be treated with anti inflammatory non steroidal drugs combined with drugs that relax muscles. Anticonvulsant drugs and Tricyclic antidepressants are also prescribed to reduce pain. These drugs work in two ways - by blocking the sensations in reaching your brain - and by producing endorphins that naturally help reduce pain.

I highly suggest trying it out and talking with Mike Dixon RMT. He has had over 20 years of clinical experience and he has been teaching spinal orthopaedics for over a decade. He has also written two books on spinal manipulation.

Get it straight. Your posture plays an important role in the health of your spine. Sitting and standing as straight as is comfortably possible will help to reduce the effects of nerve irritation and get your nerves healing quicker and more completely. Avoid sitting in soft couches or chairs, as they support the back to your need to sit well. Instead, drag a kitchen chair into the living room and spend your time sitting in a more supportive chair. Use no give you support cushions in every chair you sit in; whether at work, in the car or at home to help support your back properly.

Move it! While sitting in a straight-back chair is helpful in supporting your lower back and spine, be sure that you aren't sitting for any longer than 15-20 minutes at a time. Lack of movement in the joints of the spine especially can cause further damage, stiffness and muscle strain. Getting up and moving frequently, even if only to stretch or walk gently around the room will help to keep circulation fresh and facilitate a quicker recovery. Be sure that you stay well within your limits; if you are pushing yourself too hard and it is causing pain, then stop and give yourself a rest.

The better you take care of yourself, the greater health and vitality you will enjoy.

About the Author:

Dr. Nick Preston is a chiropractor focused on helping families enjoy greater health and founder of Wisdom and Health. If you want to learn more about **sciatica** and find products designed to help you, check out [www.wisdomandhealth.com/sciatica.html](http://www.wisdomandhealth.com/sciatica.html). You can also find products which will help you quickly make your leg pain a distant memory.

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