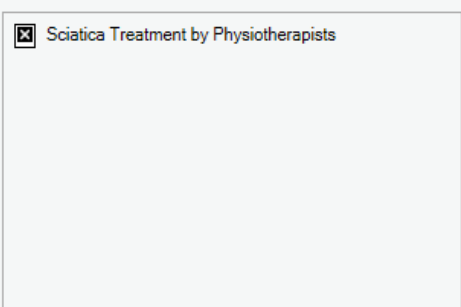


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Sciatica Treatment by Physiotherapists

Physiotherapy Treatment of Sciatica by Jonathan Blood Smyth Sciatica results from a structure impinging on a lumbar nerve root, causing compression and/or inflammation enough to cause neurological changes in the skin, reflexes and muscles served by the affected nerve. Not a common syndrome, it is estimated that 3-5% of the population suffer this kind of problem at some time. It affects men and women equally with men most susceptible in their forties and women in their fifties.?? Up to a quarter have symptoms which last more than six weeks and referral to physiotherapists for acute management is routine.



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.

Sciatica, you know that pain that runs down your leg. The pain that drives you crazy and stops you enjoying so many activities. It nags away and even makes you feel tired and grumpy.

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.

Tip 3 - Balance your Pelvis. When you pelvis twists, the Piriformis muscle tightens, the lower spinal joints stiffen and *sciatica* occurs. Re-balance the pelvis and tension eases quickly. You can check if your pelvis is okay by lying down. Place a hand under each side of the pelvis at belt height. See if there is one side that is easier to slide your hand under. If so then you pelvis is out of balance. This is only one test, for the other 3 see the links below.

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. You can also find products which will help you quickly make your leg pain a distant memory.

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.

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*.

The physiotherapist begins with postural observation of the patient which can show an inability to stand up or a thoracic shift to one side. Spinal movements are performed and the pattern of movement limitation noted, with a full neurological examination of the lower limbs. The physio is looking for deficits in muscle power, reflexes or feeling which are related to the specific nerve root involved. The straight leg raise may be performed to check the stretch reaction of the spinal nerve.

Tip 1 - in the first 48 hours use ice. If you use ice in the first 48 hours, the majority of sciatica will disappear before it starts. Put ice on the area for 10 minutes, rest for 10 minutes and then repeat the process two more times. Ice is only effective for the first 48 hours, so don't delay using it. This is the first amazing tip of sciatica home treatment and one most people fail to use...

Sciatica usually comes on quickly after an aggravating activity or posture, along with some back pain but this can go off when the leg pain starts. *Sciatica* is worsened by sneezing, sitting and coughing and is better lying down or standing. The pain is in the buttock and either down the back of the leg or the side and down into the foot. In 5% of cases the affected nerves are the first, second or third lumbar, which give front of thigh pain not beyond the knee. The full picture may sometimes not be present, with individuals describing discrete areas of pain such as the foot only.

You might be interested to know that there is some controversy over exactly what is going wrong in this particular case. Some doctors will refer to it as a ruptured disc while others may refer to it as a torn disc or perhaps even disc disease. Regardless of what they are calling it, however, you are probably interested in what can be done in order to alleviate some of the symptoms that you are experiencing. Although this will have a lot to do with the different diagnosis that you get, there are some things that can be done in order to take some of the pressure off of the sciatic nerve.

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.

One thing that you may be told to do is to use hot and cold treatments on this area of your back. This is a very common thing whenever it comes to herniated discs and they can actually help to ease some of the pain by reducing swelling. In the case of sciatica pain and a herniated disc, however, more may be needed in order for you to totally overcome the problem.

The sciatic nerve is the largest nerve that exists in the body. Starting in the lower back, it runs through the area of the buttock and then down into the legs. Since it is such a large nerve and covers a lot of ground inside of your body, there are a lot of opportunities for things to go wrong with it. Typically, the pain will occur because of problems that are experienced in the lower back. If this nerve is pinched or irritated in some way, perhaps through a herniated disc, the pain may be localized or it may even travel down into your legs. In order for you to get rid of the pain that you are experiencing, you need to remove the pressure from the sciatic nerve.

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

Receive a free e-book on back pain when you subscribe to our newsletter, just click here - Back Pain Adviser - <http://www.back-pain-advisor.com/back-pain-adviser.html>

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 will not give you the support that you need to sit well. Instead, drag a kitchen chair into the living room and spend your time sitting in a more supportive chair. Use a back support cushions in every chair you sit in; whether at work, in the car or at home to help support your back properly.

Physiotherapists use a variety of therapies to treat sciatica, with McKenzie technique being a mainstream technique for discogenic pains. Mobilisation and manipulation techniques, core stability work, myofascial release, specific exercises, manual techniques, soft tissue work and massage, analgesia, patient education, rest, the best position to relieve extreme sciatica pain and advice are all used as treatments. Most sufferers settle without investigation or surgery and a long term exercise programme is useful once the problem has settled.

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.

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.

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.

There are several types of physical therapy that you may have to go through in order to overcome the pain. Typically, this is accomplished through stretching and at times strengthening exercises that are done in the presence of a qualified physical therapist. There are also some specific exercises that you may be able to do at home in order to help speed along your recovery process.

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.

Is your sciatica pain common to herniated disc? If so, how do you get pain relief now? There certainly are a lot of different things that can go wrong with our backs. One of the worst problems that we can have, however, is if we have a herniated disc, especially if it is irritating the sciatic nerve. A herniated disc occurs whenever the padding that exists between the individual vertebrae begins to break down and eventually ruptures or protrudes. This can cause enough pain on its own but there are times whenever the bulging material will press against the sciatic nerve, either pinching it or irritating it in some way or another. This can cause a lot of suffering for the individual that has these kinds of problems.

Wouldn't it be great if you could just make it all disappear? No more sciatica, no more back pain... There is some good news ahead 5 amazing *sciatica* home treatment tips. Follow these and your *sciatica* will ease and disappear quickly.

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.

Disc prolapse can result in the internal nuclear material being extruded past the outer disc wall, physically compressing the nerve root which runs nearby. The nuclear material is also chemically irritating to the nerve structure and these irritants make the nerve and nearby structures swell, partly blocking the local circulation and the nerve's message transmission. Disc prolapse is typically the cause of proper sciatica but the size of the prolapse is not closely related to the amount of pain the person suffers.

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.

Sciatica pain is something you won't want to live with for an extended length of time. Effective treatment is available now that will ease your sciatica pain sooner than you might think.

A thorough history performed by the physio will uncover any red flags, an indication of a possibly serious underlying medical condition responsible for the pain. Loss of weight or appetite, severe pain at night, a history of cancer, unwellness or fever, bowel or bladder control difficulties, young or older patients, all these things ring warning bells and the physio will refer the patient on to a medical specialist for evaluation. The location, nature and response to activities and postures of the pain will be noted by the physiotherapist.

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.

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.

Tip 5 - If pain persists... seek help. There are many ways to release your *sciatica*, most of these can be done at home and are highly effective. The big piece of advice is ... don't wait too long and never wait too late.

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.

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.

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.

Do you know if you are likely to suffer from sciatica or back pain? Take this simple sciatica test and see... If you have sciatica, would you like to know which stretches are best? Learn the simple and highly effective ways to get rid of sciatica once and for all.

The McKenzie technique works on pain centralisation, the tendency for pain to move towards the back from the legs, suggesting a disc problem, and many physios use this technique. Pain in the front of the thigh and over the knee can be referred from the hip joint, so the physiotherapist will assess the lower limb joints to check the diagnosis. A thorough examination informs the physiotherapist of the likely diagnosis and how they might treat the syndrome, or that the patient needs to be referred to a medical practitioner for a consultation and investigation.

About the Author:

Jonathan Blood Smyth is a Superintendent Physiotherapist at an NHS hospital in the South-West of the UK. He specialises in orthopaedic conditions and looking after joint replacements as well as managing chronic pain. Visit the website he edits if you are looking for physiotherapists in Manchester.

Sciatica home treatment is easy if you know what to target, how to target the areas and how to effectively eliminate your pain. Sciatica is a common condition, but you have the tools to make it disappear quickly. It eases the quicker you do something, apply the tips above and the visit the links below and sciatica can disappear quickly. All you need to do is follow some simple tips for *sciatica* home treatment.

Tip 4 - Keep moving. You do not need to move fast but you need to move. If you rest and do not move at all, muscles will tighten quicker. This is why you may pain is worse in the morning after a nights sleep. Movement helps to keep the pelvis moving, the spinal joints eased and the muscles relaxed.

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.

The great forces which we impose on the low back mean the lumbar intervertebral discs suffer structural changes and prolapses. Many activities involve a significant level of leverage, such as flexing over, performing movements in an upright position and lifting with the arms away from the body. This greatly magnifies the forces on the discs and due to their fluid mechanics they suffer 3-5 times the loads on the skeleton. This can cause the disc walls to degenerate, giving weak areas and predisposing to prolapse at some time.

Tip 2 - Stretch your Piriformis muscle. A tight Piriformis muscle is the most common cause of *sciatica*, disc injuries for example only cause less than 4%. For the best stretches see the links below.

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.

Imagine waking up without *sciatica*. Being able to do all your daily tasks without that 'real pain in the butt'. Just think of all the things you could do again.

About the Author:

Verona Raymond gets effective results when dealing with herniated disc and sciatica pain. Learn her secret to eliminate herniated disc pain entirely and get her special Back Bonus Report to discover how you can find immediate relief. To receive your own free back pain bonus report, visit: <http://www.herniated-disc-treatment.com>

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