

These could be symptoms of other conditions, but if you experience several of these, you may be suffering needlessly from sciatica.

Chronic sciatica.

Statistics show that chronic sciatica occurs more often on the right side than on the left. Also, cold, damp weather can bring on more intense pain — by causing the leg muscles to tighten and increasing the irritation already present in the inflamed nerve. The skin of this affected leg can become cold, clammy and mottled and, in very severe cases, the calf muscle may start to waste away.

How chiropractic can help sciatica.

With pinched nerves being the major cause of sciatica, your chiropractor will use his extensive knowledge, skill, training and experience in treating the spine to bring about the correction you need. Misaligned spinal bones rarely correct themselves spontaneously or permanently. However, your Doctor of Chiropractic will locate the misaligned vertebrae (causing pinched nerves) with the use of X-rays and other diagnostic methods. When located, the chiropractor then aligns these vertebrae to relieve nerve pressure and the patient's pain. Rarely is surgery necessary in such cases.

The Doctor of Chiropractic works on the underlying cause of pain, not just the pain symptom alone. Stabilizing the bones in their proper position takes

time, but when the vertebrae no longer pinch nerves, the cause of sciatica has been corrected.

Early treatment is important! See your chiropractor immediately for any early warning signs of sciatica.

**Give this pamphlet to a friend!
He or she may be suffering
needlessly from sciatic nerve
pain that chiropractic care
can alleviate.**

Complements of:
Dr. Cameron Stewart
Chiropractic Physician
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Sciatic Nerve Pain



Sciatica

Sciatic pain hits with an agonizing bolt that is tearing and sharp. It is so severe that it is almost impossible to compare it to any other pain experience. Extending into the hip, thigh and down the back portion of the leg — along the sciatic nerve — it also can shoot into the ankle and the foot. Sometimes it skips around at these points and at other times it hits all of them at once. Anyone who has had a very severe toothache for a long period of time might be able to envision the intensity of sciatic pain.

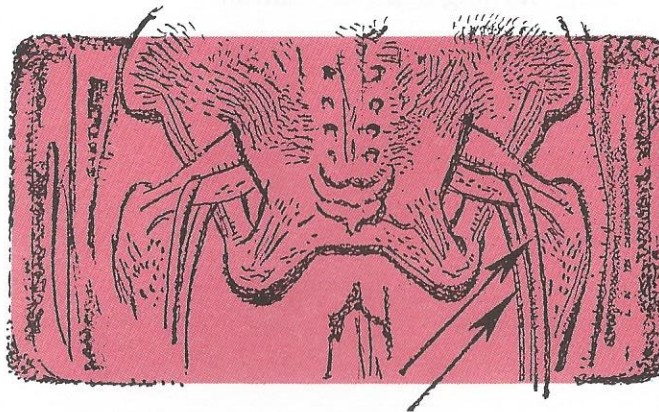
What is the sciatic nerve?

As the largest and longest nerves of the body, the two sciatic nerves extend some two and one-half feet from the lower spine down through each leg — one into the right leg and the other into the left. They serve as the main communication lines between the brain and the thigh, lower leg, foot and toes. For this reason, they are essential to good health and any interference or irritation along the course of these nerves can result in excruciating pain. Often strong pain-killing drugs offer little or no relief.

What is sciatica?

When this sciatic nerve becomes inflamed, the various areas that are affected have developed a condition we call sciatica. Since tissue all up and down the length of the leg — as well as the hip and lower back — are served by this nerve, sciatica can involve a small area or the full length of the leg. Sciatica is a frequently misunderstood and

underrated disease condition and is sometimes referred to mistakenly as sciatic rheumatism. Often it is called simply low-back pain or hip pain. Some people even refer to it as lumbago.



What causes sciatica?

Various health problems can bring about an attack of sciatica. Even a vitamin or mineral deficiency or very mild arthritic inflammation in the lower spine can bring on a mild case, because the condition originates in the lower spine at the root of the sciatic nerves. Prolonged pressure on the nerves in the lower back will bring about the condition. Such pressure may be caused by a tumor developing near the nerve and pressing against it, by constipation that is unrelieved for a period of time, or by the so-called "slipped disc" that protrudes and presses on the nerve roots in the lower back area. However, these conditions are relatively rare as the cause of sciatica. Sciatica is generally caused by pinching of the nerve in the lower spine.

Warning signs of sciatica.

Since in all other ways a sciatica victim may appear to be in perfect health, this person may be slow to accept minor pain warning signals. As an example, a low back pain may not seem important at the time and may be dismissed or ignored. But sometimes just a small movement in the wrong direction can turn minor into violent and furious pain. The victim might have been lifting a weight, bending over, falling down or even making a slight misstep and sudden turning motion. Allowing this pain to continue for a considerable time without treatment may prolong and complicate remedial treatment. Since most people tend to ignore a pain when it is slight and in its early stages, it is extremely important that any type of recurring back pain be treated by your chiropractor as soon as you become aware of it.

There are several early signals that should send you to your chiropractor for a good spinal check up to determine if you have sciatica:

Your admission that you "have had a weak back for years;"

Legs that ache painfully at the end of the day;

Prolonged constipation;

Pain after standing or walking for a long period of time; or

Especially, a sharp tearing pain in your hips, thighs or lower legs.