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Sciatica: cause and diagnosis

The nervous system of our body mostly depends on the musculoskeletal system. If any kind of displacement occurs in the joints, bones and spines, the nerves, which lie underneath, are compressed. As a result, we suffer immense pain. Moreover, due to this displacement, the vital organs of our body are affected causing disorder. However, one of the most common types of spinal displacements is slipped disc. Actually, slipped disc is caused due to the breaking down of the various circles of connective tissues that bulge out towards the spinal cord. Slipped disc can lead to different kinds of disorders in your body. However, the most common disorder is the compression of the vital nerves, which pass underneath the discs. **Sciatica** is a symptom, which is caused due to the compression of the nerve roots that give rise to the sciatic nerve. It may as well cause due to the compression or irritation of the sciatic nerve itself. The compression is caused mainly due to the slipped disc.

Sciatica: cause and diagnosis

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.

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.

Sciatica has become a common problem for the people, who are above 50 years. It is because, after 50 years, the spinal cords become very weak and even a minor injury or strain can lead to slipped disc. Apart from that, slipped disc is mainly caused by physical labor, accident or any kind of exhaustion. There are different kinds of diagnosis, which can help in the treatment of sciatica or slipped disc. However, the foremost thing is to undergo an x-ray examination. After examining the x-ray, the physician will ask you to resort to certain exercises, like walking on toes, exercising the spine, bending forward and backward, lying on your back, raising leg.

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.

One of the outer factors that is pathogenic and mysterious, that is wind is considered to carry influences into the body which are pathogenic thereby contributing to the unpredictable nature of the pain.

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.

Wintergreen oil which contains quantities of methyl silicate, is used in a wide fashion externally for its activities which are non inflammatory (used for *sciatica*, sore muscles or forms of arthritis). Tea which is prepared from the herb has a stimulating flavor and is used for neuralgia, nephritis and headaches.

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.

For more resources about slipped disc or even about sciatica please review this website <http://www.thrivechiro.com.au>

Many people in the world experience **sciatica** in the form of lower back pain, or pain in the lower parts of the leg and the foot. Sometimes, the pain is too severe and it is accompanied by muscular weakness, difficulty in moving the legs and numbness. Moreover, the **sciatica** symptom is felt only in one side of the body. Some people do not understand the meaning of sciatica and they tend to take it as a form of diagnosis. The *sciatica* is caused due to the compression of the lumbar nerves or the sciatic nerves, which is caused due to the herniation of the spinal disc. The spinal discs are composed of rings of cartilage that are spongy. The discs separate the vertebra, which allows room for the roots to protrude through the vertebra and whenever you move, the roots of the nerves are compressed by the spines, causing intolerable pain. Sciatica can also be caused by tumors impinging on the spinal cord.

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.

It is the nerve that starts at the buttocks and runs down the back of the leg. It is a combination of multiple spinal nerves and is about an inch long in the buttocks. Generally, when people start complaining about pain in the sciatic nerve, it's not the sciatic nerve that created this pain, instead, it's a problem of the nerve being pinched when it leaves the spine.

Reasons for sciatic nerve pain There are various causes that lead to sciatic nerve pain, but the major reasons that can lead to this type of pain are: 1. Excessive pressure on the sciatic nerve: Sciatic nerve pain can be a result of unwanted pressure put on the body due to improper posture, strain in the muscles, pregnancy, overweight, using a very soft mattress for sleeping purpose. It can also have excessive pressure on the sciatic nerve due to slip disc. Some cases of sciatic nerve pain have been recorded by due to the compression of the sciatic nerve by a tumor encircling the spinal cord in the lower back. 2. Degenerative arthritis: It is also a common cause of sciatica. Degenerative arthritis also known as Osteoarthritis can be identified by certain specific characteristics like creation of bone spurs or a set of protruding bone which presses on the nerve roots. Older people sometimes may develop a medical condition called spinal stenosis, where the nerve is compressed due to narrowing of space in and around the spinal cord.

Sciatica's symptoms and complications The most important symptom of sciatica is that a pain in that runs down from the buttocks and unto the back of the leg and thighs. It not necessary that the pain stops there it may even continue down to the foot or can below the knee. The pain that one feels due sciatica has a variation nature: it can be sharp or dull, burning or shooting sensation, non-stop or may come in intervals. One of its properties is that the pain is felt on only one part of the body. Some complain about a acute or intense pain others complain about numbness or weakening in parts of the leg where it hurts the most. This can sometimes lead to serious neurological problems.

Treatment and prevention This can be cured by treating the cause that lead to sciatica such as slip disc. Doctor's can prescribe painkillers, muscles relaxants, corticosteroids to reduce inflammation. Average amount of exercise should be considered if pain becomes minimal. Therapy sessions are advised to strengthen abdominal and back muscles once the symptoms have minimized.

According to the viewpoint of the Chinese, the patients who are suffering pain due to *sciatica* are normally diagnosed to be suffering from a kind of a syndrome. A bi syndrome usually involves pain and blockage and is very common in the bodies' lower part. Such syndromes might occur due to factors that are unknown. There may be very little reason for occurrences of such syndromes. One of the reasons could be a noteworthy injury of the back.

There are a number of herbal remedies which provide relief from pain in the back. There are a number of herbal remedies that have a number of energetic ingredients, just like the normal medications have. Medications in this context are the ones that provide relief from pain, help in relaxing muscles, and increase blood circulation. They might also have certain side effects. The bark of the willow contains ingredients that are active such as aspirin. This may also lead to certain effects that are adverse. According to a study there are natural products that contain current oils or leaf may be helpful and safe in case of pain that occurs because of inflammation.

Also there are absolutely no regulations by the government on any products of such kind. But the safety that these natural products have cannot be definite. Optional or herbal remedies are not under any kind of regulation and the quality of such products is not controlled publicly. Plus there can be substances that can adversely affect the chemistry of the body and can generate dangerous side effects.

Want to know more about Sciatic Nerve Pain? Visit <http://www.treatsciaticanow.com>

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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.

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.

There have been numerous cases regarding extremely serious and fatal side effects rising from such natural products. Some of the herbal remedies were also found to have customary directed medication. Asia is the place from where most of the problems that occur due to natural remedies were reported. According to studies a great amount of such natural remedies contain toxics.

The most important thing in this regard is taking absolute rest. Apart from these exercises, sciatica can also be cured through different kinds of therapy. One of the most common therapies is chiropractic treatment. Through this treatment, the chiropractor manipulates the different spinal cords and through the external pressure, normalizes the slipped disc. There are different diagnoses, which have been introduced these days for treating slipped disc. However, the most important thing regarding slipped disc or sciatica is prevention. If you are careful about your movement and if you exercise regularly, you can keep yourself away from these physical disorders.

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.

Edward Wiggin

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