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Burning Limbs: The Truth About Sciatica

Have you ever felt a chronic, burning pain that spreads from your lower hip running down to your foot? Is it just as painful sitting down or standing up? You might be suffering from **sciatica**.

Sciatica, as the name implies, affects the sciatic nerve. The sciatic nerve is the single longest nerve in the body. It originates from the lower lumbar region of your spine, through the pelvis, through the hind portion of your leg down to your foot. It is mainly responsible for distributing blood to the back of our lower extremities.

The most common causes of sciatica are: a herniated disc, lumbar spinal stenosis, spondylolisthesis, trauma, piriformis syndrome, and spinal tumors. When one suffers from a herniated disc, there is an inflammation or bulging of the spinal disc causing it to protrude out of the annulus. The annulus is the space between the spine where the spinal discs are located. Disc herniation could exert pressure on the nearby nerve root causing a direct compression on sensitive nerve tissues such as the sciatic nerve. Lumbar spinal stenosis is almost the same as disc herniation in the sense that spinal nerves are pinched. In this case, though, the spinal canal shrinks, squeezing and applying too much pressure on the spinal nerve inside. The spinal nerve branches out of the spinal canal to the entire body through openings called as neural foramina. Once these passages are congested or narrowed, it causes nerve compression. If the blockage happens on these passageways, they're considered foraminal stenosis. If it occurs on the opening where the sciatic nerve passes, it may cause sciatica.

Another cause can be spondylolisthesis, or more commonly known as slipped discs. It may also cause *sciatica* when a vertebral disc moves out of place and applies direct pressure to the spinal nerve adjacent to it, usually occurring on the lumbar or the lower portion of the spine. Blunt force trauma to the lower back region may cause severe damage to the spine and may cause sciatica as well. Accidents or external forces that may cause bone fractures like vehicular accidents, horse riding accidents, sports injuries may all lead to sciatica as bone fragments may occasionally be the cause of the nerve compression. The piriformis syndrome occurs when the piriformis muscle spasms and compresses the sciatic nerve. In this case, the sciatic nerve running beneath the piriformis muscle may sometimes get irritated by movement of the said muscle.

Lastly, spinal tumors are anomalous growths on the spine that can either be benign or malignant. Rare as sciatica cases being caused by spinal tumors may be, once a tumor develops in the lumbar region, it may cause nerve compression that may trigger **sciatica**.

There are a lot of treatments recommended for sciatica, some non-invasive and some involving surgery. In cases of bone fragments, spinal tumor, and severe cases of slipped or herniated disc causing the sciatica, of course surgery would be required as treatment. But for some minor instances, chiropractic treatment and acupuncture is enough to relieve the pain. Chiropractic therapy may range from ice/cold therapy, ultrasound, transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS), to spine adjustment or manipulation. These entail for the lumbar area to be exposed to cold or heat to reduce inflammation and muscle spasms.

Acupuncture is a form of alternative medicine that originated from China. Fine needles are inserted into your skin in strategic points in the body to release negative energy and restore health and well-being, and treat pain and illnesses. It has been proven effective by medical practitioners. It is highly recommended as a treatment for generic lumbar pain, even for mild sciatica, as it supposedly releases tension from the spastic muscles and relieves the pressure from the compressed nerve.

So if you have been experiencing sharp, burning pain on your lower extremities, it is best that you consult a medical practitioner at once. You might be experiencing sciatica. But like they say, prevention is better than cure. Let's not abuse our bodies. RESOURCE BOX: Choose Variety of High Quality Medicines at Online Medicines Enjoyed Reading this article? More here: [Pharmacy Articles](#)

David Lind

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