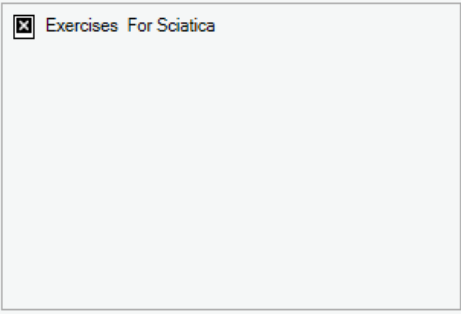


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Exercises For Sciatica

Before we look at a few exercises for sciatica it is important to understand what sciatica is. Often misused and not clearly defined, *sciatica* is not a diagnosis in itself but in actuality sciatica is a set of symptoms being caused by another medical issue, most often a slipped or herniated disk. The term sciatica refers to the pain caused when one or more of the nerves exiting the lower spine are being compressed or irritated. These nerves exiting the lower spines make up the sciatic nerve. A herniated or slipped disk is not the only medical condition that can cause sciatica but it is the most common.



Another way of curing the problem would be with the help of yoga. One might need surgery if sciatica is caused by a hernia in the disk then one might need a surgery. Yoga plays a great deal in curing the problem. Daily stretches also serves as a good precautionary protection against due to **sciatica**.

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.

??? When getting out of bed, try rolling onto your side first, letting the weight of your feet and legs dangling over the edge of the bed, pull your body into a sitting position. This puts less stress on the lower back, helping you to avoid triggering a painful muscle spasm.

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.

The medical term for sciatica is a radiculopathy, which means that a spinal disc has extended beyond its normal position and is irritating the radicular nerve (nerve root) in the lower back, which connects with the sciatic nerve. The sciatic nerve branches off as it travels down the lower extremity through the back of the leg, and thus pain can be experienced along this route. Even though it may seem counterintuitive, healing **sciatica** pain through exercise is better than bed rest. Resting for a day or two after the patients **sciatica** flares up is acceptable, but inactivity after this time will usually make the pain worse. Your back muscles and spinal structure become deconditioned without exercise and movement and are less able to support the back. Leading to strain and further back injury this deconditioning and weakening is the most common reason for additional back pain. If you want to have healthy spinal discs you need to make sure that you are exercising. Nutrients and fluids are exchange within discs through movement and help to keep them healthy. The focus of most sciatica exercises are on strengthening the back and abdominal muscles to provide more strength and support for your back. If you have muscles that cause pain when they are tight and inflexible, stretching exercises for sciatica targeted muscles is recommended. When you partake in stretching and strengthening exercises, the average patient will recover more quickly from a **sciatica** episode and prevent future flare ups of the pain. Because sciatic pain is not caused by the same ailments, specific **sciatica** exercises are recommended depending on the cause of the pain. Its just like bringing your car into the mechanic, if the muffler is the problem then rotating the wheels will most likely not fix the problem. A certified athletic trainer, physical therapist, chiropractor or or spine specialist who deals with back and leg pain associated with sciatica may recommend a treatment program with exercise being a part of it. Making sure you are properly diagnosed before starting a specific **sciatica** exercise program is important because, while it is rare, **sciatica** pain can be cause by serious medical conditions such as a tumor or infection that require prompt medical attention. I was going to list an assortment of exercises that one could do but I don't think with what I have said in my above statement that this would be a good idea. Self diagnosis can often lead to further injury so I stick to what I wrote and recommend that before you start specific sciatica exercises you should consult one of the above recommended specialists and discuss a treatment plan with a professional.

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.

This kind of a pain can occur when the sciatic nerve gets pressed as a result of pressing it against a hard tool or keeping something thick like cards or wallets in ones back pocket or even by wearing a tight belt. But such pain can be cured by performing a number of exercises under the supervision of a physical therapist.

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.

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 can occur at any time in a normal pregnancy but it is most common during the second and third trimester, when the baby is larger and carried lower in the abdomen. Known as Pregnancy-Related Sciatica, it is caused by the pressure of the baby on the sciatic nerve. This is the largest nerve in the body, about the diameter of a finger. Its fibers branch off the spinal cord at the 4th and 5th lumbar vertebra (L4, L5) and the first few segments of the sacrum.

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.

Imagine the surprise a woman must feel while dealing with the physical symptoms and discomforts of pregnancy, to suddenly develop severe back pain. This is not the usual low back pain that is often experienced during pregnancy; it is sciatica. This sharp, shooting pain usually starts in the buttocks and radiates down the back or side of the thigh to the calf and possibly the heel. There may be paralyzing numbness, in addition to the pain, which can be severe enough to limit mobility.

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.

Some doctors suggest hydrotherapy. According to some doctors taking a bath might provide some relief from sciatica. In such an exercise one is expected to soak his/her body in water (as warm as the body temperature).then one is expected to soak his/her body in water for around 20 minutes. The bath is finished by taking a shower. A hot water shower is recommended.

??? Swimming and walking are excellent exercises if not contra-indicated by the physician. ??? Avoid walking on an incline as this can cause joint irritation and lead to problems.

Most physicians avoid prescribing medications for pregnant patients suffering from sciatica but there are several steps that can be taken to relieve or decrease the discomfort. This includes:

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.

In addition, these helpful habits may decrease the chances of developing *sciatica*: ??? Avoid hours of sitting slumped at a computer or standing with a baby on one hip. Both can contribute to lower back pain.

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As the pregnancy develops, the abdominal tendons and ligaments become looser to prepare for childbirth. The backs of some women become quite unstable and prone to injury. Medical evaluation should always be sought. In some cases, sciatic pain is due to pressure on the nerve that is caused by damage to the disc between the vertebrae of the spine. This creates inflammation and pain and requires specific treatment.

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

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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.

??? Try to avoid significant weight gain. ??? Try sleeping on a firm mattress, lying on one side. A pillow rolled up under the knees may be helpful.

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.

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.

Reflexology might also be helpful in certain cases. One needs to work on reflex points around the shoulder and the sciatic nerve. A therapist could help in finding such reflex points.

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.

??? Maintain proper posture and try to stand straight. ??? Wear flat shoes or ones with a very low heel. Avoid shoes that throw your weight backwards.

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.

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.

??? Massage to reduce muscle tension. Some experts believe that tightness in the gluteus and psoas muscles contribute to sciatic pain. Treatment once or twice a week can help relieve stress on weight-bearing joints.

The largest bone in ones body-the sciatic nerve has a tendency to be a bit uncomfortable and can cause a great amount of pain in ones buttocks. The pain that occurs in the sciatic nerve that affects the buttocks and goes down to the knees is known as sciatica. In this case it is quite natural that the pain is felt especially in one of the parts of the hip.

According to studies, some people can get relief from this problem of sciatica by consumption of potassium in large quantity. It is also advised by certain doctors to include a number of potassium rich foods in the diet of people suffering from sciatica. Foods such as potatoes and bananas are rich in potassium.

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.

??? Williams Exercises have been developed specifically for use during pregnancy. They may temporarily relieve sciatica pain as they help strengthen the muscles of the pelvic floor, the back and abdomen.

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.

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.

??? Bedrest may be necessary at times. ??? See your physician if the pain becomes unmanageable. Sciatica is unique to a pregnancy and may gradually disappear on its own. Just because you had sciatica in one pregnancy does not mean it will appear in a subsequent one.

??? Moist heat alternated with ice packs ??? Chiropractic treatments may be helpful. Be sure to select a practitioner experienced in treating prenatal patients.

It is suggested not to perform such an exercise in case of swelling of the sciatic nerve. It is suggested to pregnant women not to apply excessive pressure while performing the exercise. Or else the certain nerves could be stimulated. This could lead into the pelvic area.

People can even get relief from *sciatica* from massage. For this purpose a therapist can be consulted. Once the massage over the effected part is done it is suggested to rub the painful area with a cube of ice or with a piece of wet cloth. Massage also helps in preventing **sciatica** related problems.

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.

Find out more about Sciatica and how to cure **Sciatica** naturally at <http://www.treatsciaticanow.com>

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