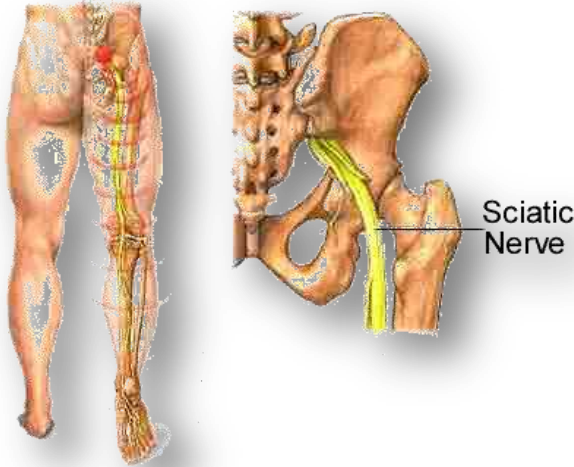


Leg Pain and Sciatica



Sciatica is a severe pain in the leg caused by compression, irritation, or inflammation of the sciatic nerves, which are thick nerves extending down the back of each leg. Each sciatic nerve consists of five smaller nerves extend from the lower spinal column, and then join together and travel down the legs. The sciatic nerves divide into tiny smaller nerves travel to the knee, foot, toes, calf, and thigh. The inflammation of any of these nerves is called sciatica.

Symptoms

People with sciatica can sometimes experience shooting pains down the leg and into the foot and toes, and other times a dull ache or numbness. Sciatica is caused by many things. Sitting at a desk for long periods of time in one position can exacerbate the pain. Exercise can make the pain worse. Tennis or golf and other twisting activities can cause sciatica pain to flare up. Sometimes, the pain may be in both legs, and other times it may alternate from one leg to the other.

Causes Of Sciatica

The sciatic nerve is very long, so there are many places along its length at which the irritation may occur. One place is the lower back. Often, a misaligned lumbar vertebra puts pressure on the nerve, causing the pain. This misalignment is called a subluxation.

Disc herniation can also cause sciatica. Discs are the "shock absorbers" between the vertebrae of the spine. They are cartilage-like cushions that occupy the spaces between the vertebrae which allow the back to turn and bend normally. If you've been injured in a car accident, or from a fall, one or more of your discs may now be bulging out one side of the spine. This is what is called a "slipped disk," or disc herniation.

Sciatica usually begins as a sharp pain in the lower back. Eventually, the pain stretches down the back of the leg, and gets worse when you sit or stand in one position for a long period of time.

Treatment For Sciatica

The doctor of chiropractic will treat your sciatica by finding the location of nerve irritation, and can relieve the pressure on the nerve, allowing the body to heal itself naturally.