

## Sciatica and Low Back Pain

The longest nerve in the body is the sciatic nerve. It runs from the lower back down the leg into the toes. When irritated or inflamed you will hear people refer to the term sciatica. This means that the sciatic nerve has become inflamed and irritated causing excruciating pain in the back of their leg. Some people note problems in the buttock, some the knee area, others near the foot and some just feel it throughout the entire leg and foot. Also, people may notice a deep ache of the leg and cramping-like sensations of the muscles, pins and needles, burning sensations, numbness and tenderness.

Therapeutic Massage can be a great tool for alleviating the symptoms of sciatica, mainly through the use of passive and active lumbar stretching, and deep tissue massage to the adjacent lumbar and gluteal muscles. Although these treatments can immensely help the condition, Chiropractic treatments are also one of the best ways to relieve the cause of the pain (nerve impingement). Most sciatic patients receive tremendous relief from chiropractic superior to traction and pain injections, often saving them from having spinal surgery.

A prolapsed disc may cause sciatica but there are other conditions, such as misalignments of the spine, that can cause irritation of the sciatic nerve. The pain in the leg is caused by compression or irritation of the sciatic nerve, which is the largest and longest nerve of the body. This nerve is made up by a number of nerves branching off of each side of the spinal cord and runs down the back of each leg.

There are several causes for sciatic-like pain, another common condition is known as piriformis syndrome, which is caused by an inflammation, irritation or tear to the piriformis muscle in the gluteal area producing nerve impingement to the sciatic nerve, a condition greatly alleviated by deep tissue massage and PNF stretching to the affected area.

The second most common condition producing low back pain is the s. i. joint misalignment, S.I. stands for sacro-iliac joint, or the joint formed between the sacrum of your spine and the iliac crest of your hip, when it becomes misaligned it can also cause excruciating pain, this condition is quickly and greatly alleviate by a chiropractor.

How can massage help? Massage can bring welcome relief to affected areas such as kneading of the muscles of your lower back that have stiffened up from any muscles spasms, although massage does not manipulate the spine, more often therapeutic passive muscle stretching can bring welcome relief for most of the symptoms for sciatica, again massage coupled with chiropractic adjustments can treat not only the symptoms such as pain, numbness and tingling but also get to the root of your problem by realigning your spine to remove any interference with your sciatic nerve.

