



## HOW TO FIND RELIEF FROM SCIATICA

Frank's pain was the worst he'd ever felt. It started in his lower back but then radiated down the back of his leg all the way to his toes. Sometimes, he felt numbness or tingling in his leg, which he found especially concerning. But worst of all, this radiating pain made it almost impossible for him to get around.

Eventually, Frank visited his physical therapist, where he learned this pain had a specific term: sciatica. Its name comes from the fact that it affects the sciatic nerve, which runs from the lower back down into the foot.

Frank also learned that his sciatica, like most people's, came courtesy of a herniated disc in his lumbar spine. Fortunately, physical therapy is a frontline treatment for herniated discs, and with a month of regular PT sessions, Frank resolved his pain.

Are you experiencing radiating leg pain like Frank? If so, reach out to us at Cornerstone Physical Therapy. We can help you know for certain if your pain is sciatica or another similar condition – and we can help you find relief with a customized treatment plan.

### What Is Sciatica? Symptoms and Causes

Sciatica is a somewhat misunderstood condition. Many people refer to any radiating pain in the back and legs as "sciatica." In reality, sciatica only refers to pain that stems from pressure or irritation on the sciatic nerve.

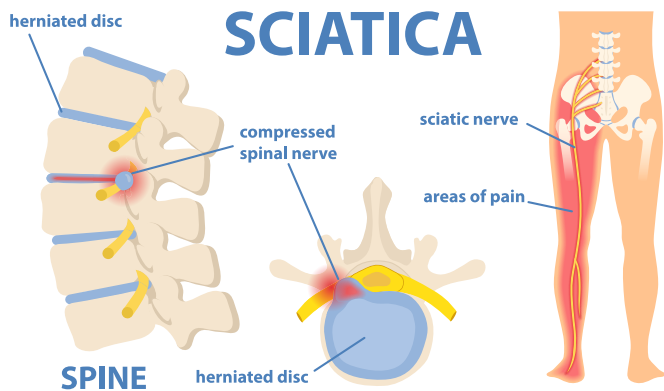
Sciatica's main symptom is pain that starts in the lower back, radiates into the buttocks, and then runs down the back of one leg into the foot, following the path of the affected sciatic nerve. Often, the leg pain will be worse than the back pain. However, other symptoms often indicate sciatica, including the following:

- Muscle spasms in the back
- "Pins and needles" sensations in the leg and/or foot
- Numbness in the leg and/or foot
- Shooting or burning pain deep in the buttocks or legs
- Weakness in the affected leg

Sciatica occurs when the sciatic nerve is pinched, compressed, or irritated in some way. But what causes that nerve irritation in the first place?

For most people, as it was for Frank, the answer is a herniated disc. Your spinal vertebrae are cushioned and protected by flexible cartilage discs (spinal discs). If one of these discs bulges or ruptures so that it irritates or pinches the sciatic nerve, you'll experience sciatica pain.

Other medical issues (such as a bone spur, inflammation related to pregnancy, or a tumor) can also cause sciatica, but these conditions are much more rare. If you have sciatica, the chances are good you have a herniated disc – and that's something physical therapy can help resolve!



## How Physical Therapy Can Help With Sciatic Pain

When treating a herniated disc (and, by extension, sciatica), our therapists will move through the following steps:

- **Manage Pain:** We'll develop a plan to address your acute pain, pulling from several options. Gentle spinal mobilizations, soft tissue manipulation of your back muscles, and pain relieving modalities such as TENS or hot and cold therapy can all help.
- **Improve Mobility:** Movement is crucial in addressing sciatica. Spinal mobilizations play an essential role here, allowing you to move the joint without exerting effort. We'll also incorporate active stretches and mobility work to help ease range of motion restrictions and prepare your body for the next phase of treatment.
- **Strengthen Your Back and Core:** As your pain lessens, we'll begin working to build strength in your core muscles, which stabilize and support your spine. By strengthening these muscles, you can alleviate the pressure on your lumbar spine that contributes to sciatic pain and a herniated disc.
- **Educate to Prevent Future Pain:** Finally, we can provide the tools to prevent a future bout of sciatica. We might help you develop a home exercise program to keep your spine healthy or show you how to properly lift heavy objects to avoid injury.

## Find Sciatica Relief at Cornerstone Physical Therapy

Sciatic pain can be incredibly intense and often debilitating. Regular physical therapy will help you resolve that pain – and the underlying cause – so you can get back to living a full, healthy life. To get started with your own personalized sciatica treatment plan, call to schedule an appointment today!

[CLICK HERE](#)  
to make your appointment today!

Sources: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK507908>; <https://www.choosept.com/guide/physical-therapy-guide-herniated-disk>; <https://www.physio-pedia.com/Sciatica>

# WE NOW OFFER DRY NEEDLING!

## What is Dry Needling?

Dry Needling is a treatment technique often used by physical therapists to relieve pain. It requires using a sterile acupuncture needle that is inserted through the skin into muscles, tendons, ligaments, and/or close to nerves to immediately reduce pain, decrease muscle tension and increase mobility. Dry Needling is based on a modern scientific study of musculoskeletal and neuromuscular systems. This treatment technique provides an environment that enhances the body's ability to heal which ultimately reduces pain.

## Is This Acupuncture?

There are many similarities and differences between dry needling and acupuncture. Licensed physical therapists in a growing number of states can use dry needling under the scope of their practice. Our physical therapists are not licensed acupuncturists and do not practice acupuncture. In contrast to most schools of acupuncture, dry needling is strictly based on Western medicine principles and research.

## What Can Be Treated with Dry Needling?

Dry Needling can be used for a variety of musculoskeletal problems. When combined with traditional physical therapy and advanced manual therapy techniques, we have had success treating most pain-related problems from head to toe and from acute to chronic conditions.

Also Dry Needling can be used to help athletes overcome delayed onset muscle soreness. As athletes push the envelope to become bigger and faster or to reach new goals, recovery becomes an essential phase in the process. Often times dry needling can be used to speed up this recovery time and allow the athlete to return to training or to playing as soon as possible.

## Is Dry Needling Painful?

For most people there is little to no discomfort with the insertion of the needle. We strive to make the treatment virtually painless; however, at times, you may experience a "twitch response" which often feels like a quick muscle cramp or ache. These sensations are normal and even desirable at times. Following this technique, muscle soreness can be felt up to 24-48 hours. The application of heat or ice and drinking plenty of fluids usually reduces the soreness.

Dry Needling is a powerful treatment technique that when in used with conjunction with our other physical therapy treatments, can help you relieve your pain and improve your function quickly. Call us today to learn more about our dry needling therapy.

Visit us online [www.thecornerstonept.com](http://www.thecornerstonept.com) or call today (817) 826-9757

# EXERCISE ESSENTIALS

## SEATED SCIATIC NERVE TENSIONER

*Helps Ease Sciatica Pain*

Sit in a chair with one foot flat on the ground and the foot on the side you want to work flexed with your toes pointing towards your face. Lift one lower leg by lightly contracting the upper thigh while simultaneously lowering your head, slowly tucking your chin towards your chest and exhaling. Slowly return to start. 3 Sets, 10 Reps, 0 Hold



Always consult your physical therapist before starting exercises you are unsure of doing.

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## WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR SUCCESS STORY!

Click below to tell your PT story and leave your review. We look forward to hearing from you!



REVIEWS

[www.thecornerstonept.com](http://www.thecornerstonept.com)



## PATIENT SUCCESS STORY

"I love this place. The doctor, Cody and Diane, they make you feel like family; real personable. I miss them already. I told them I will be back. I highly, highly recommend this place. I trust them and you will, too. 🙏👍👍"

— Pam W.

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Expires February 29, 2024

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5517 S Hulen Street  
Fort Worth, TX 76132  
Monday - Thursday, 8 am - 6 pm  
TEL: (817) 826-9757

