



MOVEMENT FOR LIFE[®] NEWSLETTER



DOES IT HURT?

by Ashley Fittz, MS, CSCS
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As summer quickly approaches, many of us become more physically active as we play with our kids, grandchildren, or participate in a recreational sport. Along with being more active there may come a few aches and pains. Some muscle soreness is normal when starting a new activity, but other pain may be a new injury developing or a nagging old injury that was never fully addressed. Listen to your body as you increase your activity and ask yourself a simple question, "Does it hurt?" This question can only be answered "yes" or "no." If you answer "yes," then you may not be ready for that exercise or you are doing it incorrectly. If you're not sure, then the answer is "yes." Simple, right? Something like "after I warm-up it goes away" are all yes answers. It's amazing to me how many times I have asked people this simple question only to have them dance around it. The reason they

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dance around the question is because they don't like my answer. I have found that people want to know things like, "What about a secret exercise to make it better?" I have a particular saying that I like, "The secret is there is no secret."

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ASK THE EXPERTS: WHAT IS SCIATICA?

Dear Expert,

The other day a co-worker and I were discussing back pain, and she mentioned she was recently diagnosed as having sciatica. Please help me understand. What exactly is sciatica?

Sincerely,

Ms. Curious

Dear Ms. Curious,

That is a great question. Most of us have heard of the term "sciatica," but what exactly is it? Sciatica is not a condition, but rather a symptom. The cause of this symptom is due to inflammation of the sciatic nerve. The sciatic nerve begins in the low back and is formed from segments of the lower spinal cord, including the lumbar and sacral nerve roots. As the thickest peripheral nerve in the body, it runs through the back of the pelvis, and down the back of the thigh and leg. It functions to supply movement and sensation to parts of the leg.



**Amanda Tvedt,
PT, DPT, OCS**

Sciatica is most commonly caused by a herniated disc or spinal stenosis, and less commonly by peripheral nerve entrapment. It may present with symptoms such as pain in one leg which is greater than pain in the low back, pain radiating into the foot or toes, numbness

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PHYSICAL THERAPY SOLUTION FOR LOW BACK PAIN

by James E. Glinn Sr, PT
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Back pain continues to be one of the leading health care problems in the United States and beyond. To illustrate the far reaching nature of the problem, recent statistics have demonstrated that nine out of every ten individuals will suffer from low back pain at some point in their lifetime. According to the Mayo Clinic and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), most back pain is the result of muscle strain, awkward movements during lifting, poor posture, weak core muscle strength and endurance as well as poor overall fitness.



This common problem often lacks a specific etiology or pathology. In most cases of low back pain no one specific anatomical structure is accurately identified as the problem. This can leave clinicians in a

quandary of what to do for low back pain. However, there is a growing body of research and evidence to support physical therapy intervention for back pain. At San Luis Sports Therapy & Orthopedic Rehabilitation we are committed to practice physical therapy using the most recent research findings to guide our treatment. With regard to low back pain, we employ an evidence-based approach that identifies groups (classifications) of patients based on their response to specific testing administered by our physical therapists during a patient's initial consultation.

Research has demonstrated which treatments are the most effective for each of these groups. These treatments entail specific exercise prescription and various manual therapy techniques. In the July 2003 issue of the journal Spine, investigators found that patients managed with this classification based evaluation system experienced significant decreases in pain, disability, and work restrictions compared to traditional spine care.

A large two part study completed in the United Kingdom in 2004, known as the UK BEAM Trial, specifically looked at low back pain patients receiving manual physical therapy and exercise. This study demonstrated that those patients who received manual physical therapy and exercise had superior improvement in disability, pain, and fear avoidance beliefs. Because of this study, the United Kingdom National Health Service now recommends physical therapy as a cost-effective method of treatment for low back pain.

In the November 2006 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association, researchers found that physical therapy provided similar improvements in pain, physical function and disability as surgery for patients with herniated discs. Physical therapy was also rated the most cost-effective and efficient treatment for back pain from herniated discs.

Our Back Pain Treatment program includes, but is not limited to, back pain associated with trauma/injury, repetitive strain, scoliosis, postural dysfunction, pregnancy, and obesity. Significant emphasis is placed on specific exercise prescription and annual physical therapy. We embrace patient education and strive to teach our patients the critical elements of healing, anatomy and function of the low back and pelvis, safe activity as well as proper posture and body mechanics.

If you have any questions about this program, please contact one of our offices and ask to speak with one of our physical therapists.

DOES IT HURT?

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Ben Franklin once said, "Common sense is not so common." Use your common sense. If you're injured and you want to get better, exercise should not cause pain. This seems simple, but many people ignore pain all the time and rationalize it. Discomfort or a little muscle soreness is normal after a new or intense workout. The most common discomfort, Delayed Onset Muscle Soreness (DOMS) often occurs 1 - 2 days following the workout. This is normal. This discomfort should only last a couple days and should be limited to the muscles and not the joints or tendons.



Progression in any cardiovascular or weight training program should be based on full, pain-free range of motion. If you need to change or reduce range of motion, there's a problem. Don't increase time or distance more than ten percent from one session to the next. If you experience pain, work with your personal trainer, physical therapist, or physician to make sure the issue is properly addressed. I have used these simple tips in all of my programs and have been able to keep countless people healthy. I am sure the same concepts will help you.



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**Keep in touch with our team,
we want to hear from you!**

ASK THE EXPERTS: WHAT IS SCIATICA?

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and paraesthesia in areas of the leg.

Conservative treatment of sciatica focuses on pain and inflammation control, and your physical therapist will direct you with specific exercises, correction or movement impairment, and education. In general, if conservative treatment is appropriate the clinical course of acute sciatica is positive, with 80% recovering within 8 weeks, and 95% within 1 year.

Prevention may not always be possible, but protecting your back may reduce your risk. Always practice proper lifting techniques, lift with your legs and hold objects close to your chest. exercise regularly to maintain and increase the strength of the main muscular stabilizers in your back and abdomen. Use correct and effective posture when sitting and standing, and take breaks to change positions if you sit while working.

ABOUT OUR EXPERT

Mandy received her undergraduate degree at Chadron State College in 2001, and her Doctorate of Physical Therapy at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in 2004, in her native state of Nebraska.

Have a question for one of our experts?
Send your questions to ashley@spsportstherapy.com

Upon completion of her graduate studies, Mandy moved to the central coast of California. While there she was very fortunate to have opportunities to participate in two year long manual therapy sessions and worked directly with physical therapy residents and fellows associated with the Kaiser Permanente program.

She relocated to Tucson in 2007, and immediately felt right at home. That same year, Mandy became a Board Certified Specialist in Orthopaedic Physical Therapy (OCS) through The American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties. This certification indicates Mandy possesses a greater depth of knowledge and skills related to her area of practice, placing her in an elite group of physical therapists nationwide. Clinically, her specialty is in orthopaedics and manual therapy, as well as developing a women's health program in the treatment of pelvic floor dysfunctions. Her clinical goal is to provide a professionally integrated approach to health and wellness. In September, she married her husband Lukas, who is also a physical therapist.

ENROLL TODAY IN AUTOMOBILE UNIVERSITY

by Ashley Fittz, MS, CSCS
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How much time do you spend in your car each day? Are you making the most of your time? Over the past year I've made a deliberate effort to make the most of my drive to and from work which is 40 minutes each way. I call this, "Automobile University." The famous motivational speaker Zig Ziglar coined the term to describe the process of learning while commuting. With the abundance of podcasts and audio books at our fingertips, there is no reason we can't be learning and improving ourselves while commuting.

In a recent study, researchers found that if a person drives at least 12,000 miles a year and uses this method of education, in a matter of 3 years he or she would have the equivalent of two years of college education.

Audiobooks may be a little more expensive than printed books, but they actually they save time and money because they allow you to use your down time more efficiently. Many podcasts or audiobooks can be easily downloaded for free or for a small price from iTunes or other online sources.

Take the trip today and make the most of your time. Enroll in "Automobile University!"

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