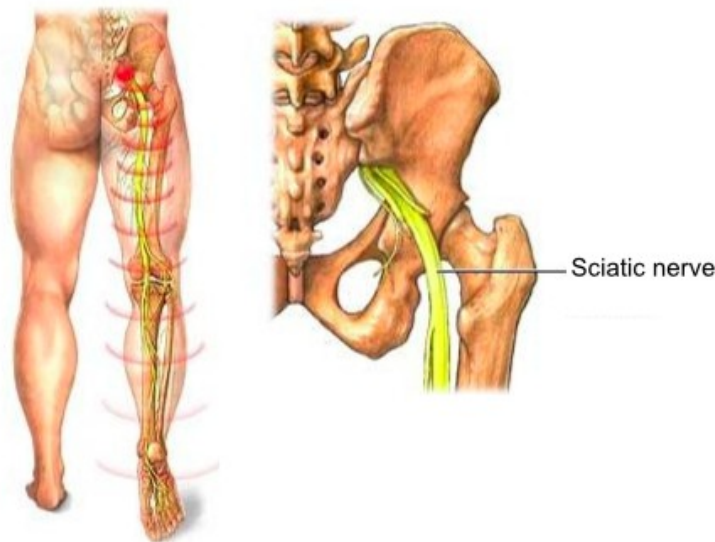


## **Sciatica**

Sciatica is a condition where the sciatic nerve is being irritated or pinched by a herniated disc in the low back or by an inflamed muscle (Piriformis Syndrome). The symptoms with this condition are the following:

1. Weakness in the legs/feet
2. Sharp pain in the legs while walking
3. Numbness or tingling in the legs and feet
4. Sharp pain in the low back and glutes
5. Sharp pain that travels down the leg(s)
6. Sharp pain while sneezing or coughing



## **Solution**

If the sciatica is caused by a herniated disc, you must perform exercises that move the disc away from the nerve and decompress the spine.

If the sciatica is caused by inflammation of the Piriformis muscle, you must stretch the muscle and bring down the inflammation.

## **Analysis: Sciatica**

In order to know if your sciatica is being caused by a herniated disc in your low back or an inflamed Piriformis muscle, you need to do some orthopedic tests. If you show positive symptoms while performing the test, then that will give you a good impression of what is causing the problem.

### **Orthopedic Tests for Sciatica caused by Piriformis Syndrome**

#### **Test 1**



Start on your back. Bend the leg that hurts up and towards the opposite shoulder. If you're feeling more pain in the leg or pain that travels down the leg, this means the Piriformis muscle is pinching the sciatic nerve and causing the sciatica.

#### **Test 2**



Start laying on the side opposite the leg that hurts. This can be done on a bed or couch. Bend the affected leg and let that leg hang down towards the floor. If you're feeling more pain in the leg or pain that travels down the leg, this means the Piriformis muscle is pinching the sciatic nerve and causing the sciatica.

### Test 3



Start on your back. Turn the foot on the affected side inwards (pointing to the other foot) and lift the affected leg up and towards the opposite leg. If you're feeling more pain in the leg or pain that travels down the leg, this means the Piriformis muscle is pinching the sciatic nerve and causing the sciatica.

## **Exercise Plan: Sciatica caused by Piriformis Syndrome**

If the sciatica is caused by inflammation of the Piriformis muscle, you must stretch the muscle and bring down the inflammation.

These are the prescribed exercises to treat sciatica caused by Piriformis syndrome.

<b>Exercises</b>	<b>Sets</b>	<b>Repetitions</b>
Figure 4 (14)	4	10
Figure 4 on your back (36)	4	10
Angled leg (37)	4	10
Leg crusher (38)	4	10
Knee to shoulder (16)	4	10
Tripod (43)	4	10

For pictures and descriptions of the exercises on this page, go to the *Exercise Guide* section of this book (Page 42). The numbers in parenthesis next to each exercise corresponds to the exercise number in the Exercise Guide.