

Sciatica

What is Sciatica?

Sciatica is pain due to shock or damage to the major leg nerve, the sciatic nerve. This is located in the back and outer side of both legs. However, sciatica generally affects only one side of the body.

Signs and Symptoms

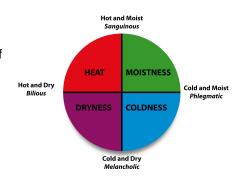
Pain radiating from the lower back, through the back of the thigh, and down through the leg. Depending on where the sciatic nerve is damaged, the pain may also radiate to the foot and even the toes. Other symptoms are: stiffness in the back, leg and foot; decreased sensation or numbness affecting the back of the calf or sole of the foot; tingling, burning or abnormal sensations; weakness of the knee or foot; difficulty in walking; inability to move the foot and bend the knee (in severe cases).

Causes and Risk Factors

Sciatica may develop due to several causes: a slipped disc; local pressure due to a poorly administered intra-muscular injection; prolonged pressure on or entrapment of the nerve; direct trauma due to fracture of the pelvis and gunshot wounds. Risk factors include improper lifting of heavy objects; poor posture; exposure of the lower back to cold weather or low temperatures, and excessive intake of cold & dry foods.

The Tibb View of Sciatica

According to Tibb, sciatica is associated with the qualities of **coldness with dryness**, which are aggravated by the exposure of the lower back to coldness. Overuse and improper bending and lifting techniques create excessive heat which eventually leads to dryness and then cold. Insufficient heat due to decreased blood supply to the lower back can result in chronic inflammation which causes nerve entrapment. All temperamental types can be affected.



Management of Sciatica

Management is aimed at **reducing the excess coldness with dryness** associated with sciatica, by implementing Tibb Lifestyle Factors that will **increase the qualities of heat and moistness.** This assists Physis in addressing both the symptoms and causes of sciatica.

Tibb Lifestyle Factors Food and Drink

- Eat mostly Hot & Moist foods such as spinach, dates, mango, and tumeric, followed by
 Hot & Dry foods like oily fish, green or red peppers, avocados and parsley.
- Eat less of Cold & Moist foods such as milk, pineapples, and broccoli, and the least amount of Cold & Dry foods like beef, tomatoes, sour milk, and beans.
- Eat mostly fruit and vegetables during an acute attack.
- Drink 2-3 litres of warm water daily.
- Limit the intake of tea, coffee, cauliflower, dried beans, lentils, fish, eggs and peas.
- Avoid all red meat for at least 15 days.
- Avoid all fried foods and roasted nuts.

Other Lifestyle Advice

- Rest in order to take the weight off the affected area until the symptoms subside.
- Once the acute attack has subsided, practice stretching exercises like yoga as this may help relieve nerve compression.
- Two to three days after the onset of the acute attack, apply a hot pack to relieve pain in the affected area.
- Avoid lifting heavy objects. When the condition resolves, practice proper bending and lifting techniques. For example, before lifting, bend down at the knees, and keep the load as close to the body as possible.

Herbal Remedies

- Add ¼ ½ teaspoon of turmeric to 1 cup of hot milk. Add a pinch of black pepper and honey to taste. Drink twice daily.
- **Detox** Add Epsom salts to bathwater to help remove toxins and soothe inflamed muscles.

Cold & Dry Foods

Meats	Vegetables	Fruits	Nuts	Grains & Seeds	Dairy Products	Oils	Spices & Herbs	Drinks	Flavourants	Condiments & Spreads	Confectionary & Desserts	Cereals	Dishes
beef	brussel sprouts	(all sour fruits)	peanuts	barley	sour cream	coconut oil	basil	coffee		balsamic		cornflakes	sour dishes
biltong (beef)	cabbage	green apples		beans(all types)	egg white	corn oil	tamarind	ice		vinegar		maltabella	
crabs	cauliflower	cherries, coconut		corn	sour milk	sesame oil		sour fruit juices		peanut butter		mielie meal	
fish	eggplant	china/dry fruit		couscous	yoghurt			tea (black)		pickles		millet	
knuckles	green beans	granadilla		lentils						tomato sauce			
mussels	mushrooms	grape fruit		maize						worcestershire			
ostrich	peas	lemon, lime		mielies						sauce			
oysters	potatoes	naartjies, oranges		popcorn						vinegar			
pork	sauerkraut	pineapple,plums		poppy seeds									
snails	tomatoes	prunes, pomegranate		samp									
snoek		raspberries		sesame seeds									
tripe		strawberries											
tuna		sultanas											

Cold & Moist Foods

Meats	Vegetables	Fruits	Nuts	Grains & Seeds	Dairy Products	Oils	Spices & Herbs	Drinks	Flavourants	Condiments & Spreads	Confectionary & Desserts	Cereals	Dishes
duck	beetroot	apricot	macadamia	cucumber seeds	coconut milk		cardamom	milk shakes	fructose		custard	pronutro	
rabbit	baby marrow	cranberries		linseed	cow's milk		coriander	rooibos	glucose		ice cream	rice crispies	
	butternut	figs		melon seeds	goats milk		cumin	sugar cane	rose syrup		sago		
	broccoli, carrots	kiwi fruit		pumpkin seeds	buttermilk		vanilla	juice		1			
	cucumber	litchis, melons		rice cakes	butter			water					
	squash	mulberries		rice	margarine								
	lady fingers (okra)	pawpaw, pears		semolina	rice milk								
	lettuce	prickly pears			soya milk								
	pumpkin	quince											
	radish, sprouts	spanspek											
	soya beans	sweet apples											
	tofu												
	zucchini												

Hot & Dry Foods

Meats	Vegetables	Fruits	Nuts	Grains & Seeds	Dairy Products	Oils	Spices & Herbs	Drinks	Flavourants	Condiments & Spreads	Confectionary & Desserts	Cereals	Dishes
all small bird	bitter gourd	avocado	cashews	celery seeds	eggs	mustard oil	aniseed	alcohol	pungent and	chilli sauce			spicy dishes
meat	celery	grapes	hazel nuts	chickpeas			cinnamon	grape juice	bitter	mustard sauce			
chicken	green pepper		pecan nuts	fenugreek seeds			cloves, garlic	herbal teas	flavourants	peri-peri			
lobsters	leek		walnuts	gram flour			green/red chilli	(see herbs)		sauce			
mackerel	onion			mustard seeds			fenugreek						
oily fish	red pepper			papad			lavender						
pilchards	yellow pepper						nutmeg						
prawns							oregano						
sardines							paprika						
							parsley						
							rocket, rosemary						
							saffron						
							tarragon						

Hot & Moist Foods

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buck	artichokes	bananas	almonds	bread	clarified butter	castor oil	bay leaves	green tea	honey	mayonnaise	biscuits	all bran flakes	sweet dishes
goat	asparagus	dates	brazil nuts	bulgar wheat	condensed milk	olive oil	black pepper	hot water	molasses		cakes	bran	
goose	olives	guavas	pistachios	flour	cheese	sunflower oil	cayenne pepper	juices	salt		chocolate	honey smaks	
lamb	spinach	mangoes	apricot kernels	pasta	cream cheese		chives	(see fruits)	sugar		liquorice	muesli	
liver	spring onion	peaches		rye bread	mother's milk		ginger, fennel	herbal teas			vermicelli	nutri-k	
mutton	sweet potato	papaya		sunflower seeds	(for babies)		green masala	(see herbs)				nutrific	
turkey	turnips			wheat	fresh cream		marjoram					oats	
				macaroni			mint, sage					puffed wheat	
				dill seeds			soya sauce					taystee wheat	
							thyme,turmeric					weetbix	
							watercress						
							white pepper						