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"treating the cause of your problem, not just the symptoms"

Does This Sound Like Your Back Problem?

There are many different potential causes of pain in the lower back. The two most talked about sources of pain are from within the joints of the spine and a degenerated/herniated disk. Problems in either of these regions could cause an irritation of the nerves and produce a referred pain further down the leg (commonly termed "sciatica"). However, another very common and often misdiagnosed source of pain is the "sacroiliac joint". It is actually the joint between the "sacrum" and "ileum" bones located at each side of the pelvis and not in the spine at all.

At one point in time, it was thought that this joint did not move at all and was not a source of pain. A recent study has disproved this theory. The researchers in this study injected "freezing or anesthetic" specifically into this joint in people with low back pain. They used x-rays to be sure the needle was actually inside of the "sacroiliac joint". Once the anesthetic was given time to take affect, the low back pain was significantly better and then returned when the anesthetic wore off. Although it was never intended to be a cure for their back problem, it clearly demonstrated that the sacroiliac joint should be added to the list of possible causes of acute and chronic low back pain.

In my office, the sacroiliac joint is the most common causes of acute low back. It can occur gradually and in the absence of any heavy lifting or accidents. When sore, you will feel the pain two to three inches to one side from the middle of the low back. It can even occur on both sides at the same time. When the nerve endings located within the sacroiliac joint become irritated by inflammation or direct pressure, you may feel a referred pain that can travel to the hip, groin, and leg (see diagram). As well, strong and painful muscle spasms can accompany the pain in the joint.



Research has also shown that the fastest way for any joint to heal, particularly in the low back and pelvis, is to restore the movement or mobility of the joint. All the joints in your body are designed to nourish themselves, remove swelling, and heal after an injury. But, for this to occur, the joint has to be able to move properly. In cases of low back pain, the joints become very “stiff or jammed”. It is the job of the chiropractor to safely do a series of “adjustments” to restore and maintain this movement, allowing it to heal without the use of medications. As the joint heals and the symptoms lessen, the frequency of the chiropractic adjustments decreases. To prevent a reoccurrence of the same problem, you should begin an exercise and stretching program. As well, you should see your chiropractor regularly to identify and correct any small problems before they become big ones.