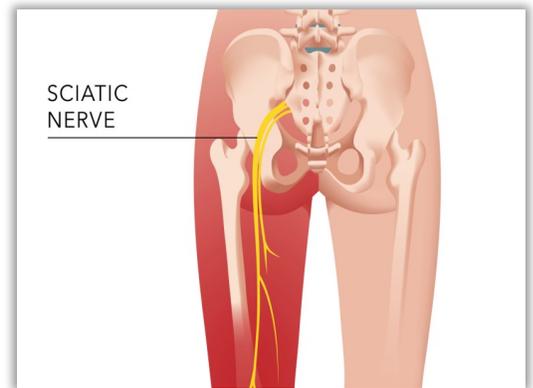


What is Sciatica?

Sciatica is pain, weakness, numbness, or tingling feelings in the leg. It is caused by injury or pressure on the sciatic nerve. The **sciatic nerve** is in the lower back and runs down the back of each leg. It controls the muscles in the back of the knee and lower leg.



What causes sciatica?

Sciatica is a sign of a medical problem. It is often caused by injuries or problems that involve the **lower back** and **spine**.

What are the symptoms?

- Pain in the lower back, butt, and down the leg.
- Numbness or weakness in the lower back, butt, leg, or feet.
- Tingling “pins and needles” feeling in the legs, feet, or toes.
- Pain that gets worse when you move.

Sciatica pain often happens on **one side**. The pain can be **mild to more severe**. You can have symptoms in the leg without having pain in the back.

How is it diagnosed?

Your doctor will review your medical history and ask you questions about your symptoms. They will do a **physical exam (check-up)** to find out what is causing the pain, and test your muscle strength and flexibility. Your doctor may order more tests, including **X-rays and MRIs**, to get a picture of your spine to find out what may be causing the pain.

What are common treatments?

Depending on the cause, sciatica often goes away on its own over time with treatment. Some at-home treatments you can do include:

- Use ice and/or hot packs on the painful area.
- Take over-the-counter medicines to help reduce pain.
- Do gentle stretches.

In some cases, your doctor may prescribe you medicine or recommend more treatments or physical therapy to help with your sciatica.

Talk with your CHN provider if you have more questions!