

## What is Sciatica...and How Is It Treated?



Have you ever hurt your back so severely that even walking was unbearable?

I'm not talking about back pain that only lasts a few days.

I mean when you don't just have a backache but a weird radiating leg pain too.

Then, it's possible you have done serious damage and pinched your sciatic nerve.

### My First Symptoms of Sciatica

It's no secret I try to act like a tough guy when it comes to pain.

However, one time my tough guy mentality wouldn't survive this type of torture.

One day in May 2014, I used a two-man post hole digger to build a raised garden box.

After quite a few times of starting up the motor, I felt an unusual pop in my low back.

Under normal circumstances, I wouldn't have been concerned, but it was more than a mere sound.

A bolt of electricity shot down my left leg.



For a second, I thought I hit a live wire!

Dismissing the sensation, I pushed through the pain and finished the job.

About a week and a half later, the pain became excruciating.

I can handle normal back pain, but this issue wasn't simply my spine hurting.

torn apart.

The backside of my left leg from my butt to my heel felt like it was being

I felt like I tore every muscle down my left leg.

And every waking moment, I felt this radiating leg pain increase by the day.

The back and leg pain were enough to pull the wind out of me and make me want to finally do something I hated to do.

I finally went to a doctor.

## The Doctor, Research & Prognosis



I consulted my doctor and he immediately ordered an MRI (magnetic resonance imaging).

Within a few days, I was diagnosed as having a herniated disc at the L5-S1 with the disc protrusion pinching the left sciatic nerve.

X-rays would not have detected this issue since it was more than a skeletal problem.

The doctor prescribed me:

1. Pain pills as needed for up to 3-5 times per day
2. Anti-seizure medication to reduce the nerve inflammation
3. And 3 one-hour physical therapy sessions per week



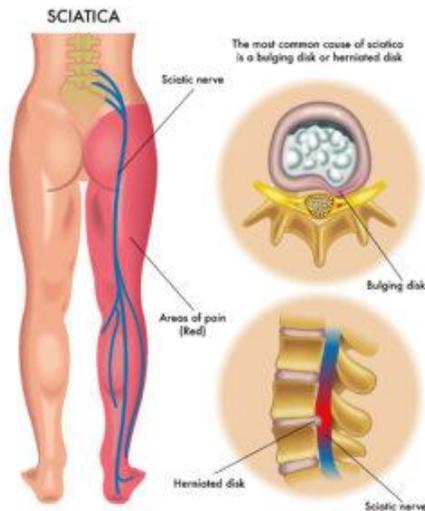
After nearly a year of no long-term pain relief, my doctor used epidural steroid injections (ESIs) on my low back.

Though the ESIs worked, they became less effective with each round.

By my fourth round of injections, the ESI merely aggravated my symptoms.

So, I gave in and asked about surgery.

## What is Sciatica?



Sciatica is when the sciatic nerve is pinched or squeezed.

The sciatic nerve originates from the spinal cord and comes out of the lumbar area (lower back).

When the sciatic nerve is pinched, it creates a shooting pain on the affected side.

If the nerve is pressed on the left side, then the left leg will feel the symptoms.

In some cases, pain is felt in both legs. Wow!

## Symptoms of Sciatica

The symptoms of a pinched sciatic nerve can include but are not limited to:

- Unusual weakness or numbness in one leg
- Radiating leg pain
- Loss of bowel or bladder control
- Relief comes when lying down
- Pain occurs primarily when standing or sitting
- Low back pain that if experienced at all is *not* as severe as the leg pain
- A pins-and-needles feeling in one leg
- A sharp or searing pain as opposed to a dull ache or tightness

## Laminotomy - Surgery for Sciatica Relief



My orthopedic doctor sent me to an orthopedic surgeon to determine if I was a candidate for back surgery.

Immediately accepted, I was on the surgeon's table within weeks.

The procedure done was a laminotomy.

The easiest description of a laminotomy is:

1. A small hole is cut in the vertebrae (bone)
2. The sciatic nerve is moved out of the way
3. The disc herniation is cut off
4. The nerve put back in its spot
5. I'm sewn up
6. And grueling physical therapy begins

This surgery was by far the worst part of the whole process.

I was helpless for the first couple weeks after the procedure.

However, I instantly felt relief on my leg after waking from surgery.

Now, my back was a whole different story.

## Alternatives to Back Surgery



Sadly, I was in pain for so long I was willing to do anything for even a minute of back and leg pain relief.

Now that I'm pain-free, I know there are alternatives to back surgery.

A few alternatives include:

1. [Holistic and herbal remedies for relief](#) - some herbs help far better than pharmaceutical drugs. And the best part is herbs have no side effects.

2. Decompression therapy - after a second run of sciatica, I discovered this non-invasive procedure. I swear by this therapy and would go to decompression therapy should I ever have sciatic issues again.
3. Core-specific exercises - sticking to a core development routine helps keep my sciatica symptoms at bay. I haven't had any sciatic issues in nearly a decade.

Another alternative for back pain relief I discuss is at:

[HowToRelieveSciaticaPainAtHome.com](http://HowToRelieveSciaticaPainAtHome.com)

## Final Word on Sciatica Treatment



I feel like my experience with sciatica came at a great cost.

And I hope you never have to pay the price I did.

If I were to recommend in order of importance:

1. Seek medical attention - don't tough it out, it's just not worth it. Besides you could do greater damage to yourself if you go it alone.
2. Try the alternatives before surgery - surgery should only be the last-ditch effort and remember the long-term success rate is NOT in your favor.
3. Take notes - when you get physical therapy, make sure you get as much information as you can for injury prevention and core strengthening exercises. This is critical to your long-term quality of life.
4. Put in the work when prescribed - If they tell you to do it, then stick to it. If you have any reservations, then share them with your healthcare provider.

I hope this helps!

In the event, you have any questions about my personal experience, please email me at [dale@dalelroberts.com](mailto:dale@dalelroberts.com).

Be well,

-Dale L. Roberts

## References & Recommended Reading:

- [Sciatica Symptoms By Stephen H. Hochschuler, MD](#)
  - [What is the symptom of sciatica? by Laser Spine Institute](#)
  - [5 Ways To Tell If You Have Sciatica By AMBER BRENZA](#)
  - [Innovative Back Pain Treatment](#)
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