



**Sciatica and  
Related Problems**

**Sciatica and related problems  
with Nadine Lockerbie — Remedial Massage Therapist**

SCIATICA is not a diagnosis but the naming of a group of symptoms; hip pain, leg pain and/or lower back pain and sole of foot pain.

Pain from abnormalities of the sciatic nerve may cause sensations such as numbness, tingling, burn-ing or hypersensitivity in any of the above areas.

Pain from sciatic nerve compression is harsher than that caused by pseudo-sciatica.

This condition mimics true sciatica and is caused by muscle abnormalities called trigger points.

A trigger point is a pea in a muscle that is tender and usually refers pain elsewhere on palpation.

This pea prevents full lengthening of the muscle. Trigger points are treated by massage techniques, finger pressure or electronic devices.

Once the trigger points have been deactivated, the regular stretching of associated muscles is the means of recovery.

Finding a remedial massage therapist who has a sound knowledge of trigger points and anatomy may be the key to relieving your pseudo-sciatica.

I often see clients who have excruciating pain referral patterns in associated tight muscles, such as in the buttock area.

The sciatic nerve can be compressed in other ways.

Back strain or injury may cause muscle spasms in the lower back, placing pressure on the sciatic nerve.

Often, a straight leg-raising test is done to help the therapist assess the origin of the condition more accurately.

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and computed tomography scans (CT scans) can give an in-depth look at the cause of sciatica.

The remedial masseur would need to know the results of these tests prior to treatment.

The piriformis muscle, when shortened by trigger points, also grows in diameter causing compression of the sciatic nerve, which passes the muscle.

Gluteus minimus supports the pelvis during walk-ing, and is the smallest of the gluteus muscles.

Trigger points within this muscle and the piri-formis cause pain down the back or side of the thigh and lower leg as far as the ankle.

People should avoid sitting for long periods of time. Don't sit on a wallet as this puts excessive pres-sure on the gluteus muscles and can promote trigger points and indirectly compress the sciatic nerve.

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