

## SCIATICA AND LUMBAGO

Acupuncture is a safe and effective way to treat sciatica. Sciatica refers to pain radiating along the sciatic nerve, which originates in the lower spine as a combination of several nerves. The nerve branches from the spine to the left and right buttocks and then travels down the back of the legs. Sciatic pain usually radiates from the buttock and is felt primarily in the back of the thigh, though it may extend to the foot. Initially, there may be a temporary prolapse or extrusion of an intervertebral disc that causes the spinal column to squeeze down or pinch the nerves. In the case of a damaged disc or vertebra, the pain will become chronic. If the force or pressure is severe enough, the nerve transmissions are interrupted and may cause weakness, loss of feeling, and perhaps result in the wasting of the limb.

Sciatic pain may be a spinal problem and can be related to cases of lower back pain. Lumbago pain may initiate from similar disc problems that cause sciatic pain, but it may also result from muscle and tendon strains in the lower back.

From the Chinese viewpoint, sciatic or lumbago pain is due to a type of *bi* syndrome involving blockage and pain and are common in the lower half of the body. *Bi* syndrome has been said to be induced mainly by the influences of cold, damp, and wind. The tendency of pain to radiate downwards is considered to be yin factors and is thought to carry the pathogenic influences into the body and contribute to the variable nature of the pain.

Acupuncture and traditional Chinese Medicine can effectively treat most cases of sciatica and lumbago offering relief to the substantial pain radiating down the lower back and legs.

### General Treatment Techniques

Acupuncture is a safe and effective way to treat chronic and acute pain due to sciatica and lumbago. In general, sciatica and lumbago are addressed with a small number of acupuncture points. The needles used in acupuncture do not hurt like hypodermic needles. They are very fine and range in thickness from about 0.17mm to 0.30mm. The number of treatments needed varies from person to person. The main treatment principal of acupuncture involves relaxing the muscles and tendons, as well as activating the flow of Qi and improving the circulation of blood in the body. Most people see a difference right away, or in two to three sessions, and few take as many as ten treatments before they notice a difference in their condition.

Some acupuncture therapies used to treat shoulder pain include:

- ◆ Distal Point Therapy
- ◆ Local Point Therapy
- ◆ Blood-letting, Cupping, Moxibustion
- ◆ Electro-Stimulation & Manipulation

### Results of Acupuncture Treatment

Acupuncture can sometimes relieve sciatica and lumbago pain instantly. Long-term relief is also promising.

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