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**k i n t s u g i**  
PHYSICAL THERAPY & WELLNESS

**Health & Wellness  
Newsletter**

*Don't Let Sciatica  
Keep You Home!*



## Physical Therapy Solutions for Sciatica and Back Pain

Take the first step to a healthier, stronger,  
and more active you! Call today!

**253.220.4317**



**INSIDE:**

- 6 Nutrition Tips For a Healthy Summer
- Patient Experience
- Healthy Recipe
- Exercise To Try At Home

*Don't Let Sciatica  
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## PHYSICAL THERAPY SOLUTIONS FOR SCIATICA

**Are you experiencing pain in your leg or numbness in your foot? Are these symptoms making it difficult for you to go about your daily routine? You could be suffering from sciatica.**

Sciatica is often a debilitating condition that is a result of compression or inflammation of the sciatic nerve. The condition most commonly is associated with pain radiating down the leg. It can be so severe that people struggle to do normal activities of daily living. While “sciatica” may sound serious, it’s entirely curable.

Call our clinic today to make an appointment. With guidance from your physical therapist you can find solutions to your pain and get back to living the life you enjoy!

### How Can You Tell if You Have Sciatica?

Although sciatica is a commonly used term, it may also cause confusion because it is sometimes used to describe any type of back or leg pain. But “true” sciatica refers to pain that radiates downwards from the lower back/buttock region along the course of the nerve into the thigh and lower leg. Symptoms that extend below the knee and into the lower leg and foot are consistent with a true sciatica.

Not all patients have pain. Some patients experience paresthesias (i.e. numbness and tingling) along the sciatic nerve’s path in the leg and foot. For some, the condition may include weakness in the muscles of the foot and lower leg. In serious cases, it can include changes to bowel and bladder function.

While sciatica pain can be intense, it is treatable. For a lot of people, physical therapy can help to resolve sciatica without operation – often within just a few weeks. Even if you’ve suffered severe sciatica spawned from leg weakness, bladder changes or nerve issues, there’s still hope.

### What Causes Sciatica?

In most cases sciatica is caused by a herniated lumbar disc where the nerve root is irritated by disc material that has ruptured. Recent evidence suggests that sciatica is not because of “compression” but a combination of pressure, inflammation and immune system defenses.

In most cases, a physical therapist can help to identify what is causing the condition and how to successfully resolve it. The combination of education and activity modification can help set the stage for a successful outcome.

### The Most Common Symptoms of Sciatica

Sciatica back pain is normally noticed as a pain radiating from the lower back/ buttock down the leg below the knee and sometimes into the foot. The dominance of leg pain (more than back pain) is a classic characteristic of sciatica.

*Continued inside.*

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# PHYSICAL THERAPY SOLUTIONS FOR SCIATICA AND BACK PAIN

Continued from previous page.

The location of the leg pain (i.e. outer calf or back of calf); paraesthesia (i.e. numbness and/or tingling) or loss of sensation, along with weakness and/or reflex changes are all indications of sciatica. Another clear sign is increased leg pain with coughing, sneezing and/or taking a deep breath. If sciatica isn't treated, it can hinder mobility altogether.

## How Physical Therapy Can Help with Sciatica

If you're experiencing sciatica, contact a physical therapist immediately. Your physical therapist will perform a thorough physical examination and based on the finding provide you with solutions that work.

**Education** – Understanding exactly what sciatica is and how to manage it can help you be proactive and find a solution for your sciatica. Your therapist knows the solutions that work. Understanding what is going on, and more importantly, what you can do about it, has been shown to be one of the most effective solutions. It seems small but consistently it has been shown to help!

**Advice To Stay Active** – It is especially important to stay active early, despite the intensity of the pain that can be associated with sciatica. We know that rest is not an effective solution. Your physical therapist can help you identify modifications to painful tasks and help you be safe and active.

**Exercise Therapy** – Supervised exercises are vital to a successful outcome. A physical therapist will tailor your exercises, monitor you and progress you based on your individual needs. Supervised exercise therapy includes directional exercises, proper postural exercises, nerve mobilization, or strength exercises.

The McKenzie Method is a technique that has been shown to be effective in identifying movements and positions to provide you with relief and is often used for home exercises.

**Spinal Manual Therapy** – Physical therapists often use spinal manual therapy for their patients with sciatica. Manual therapies include a variety of techniques that moves one or more joints within normal ranges of motion with the aim of improving spinal joint motion or function. It can also include soft tissue techniques that help to alleviate pain and allow for more mobility and improved function.

## Call Our Clinic Today

These treatments, hand-picked by professionals, can completely eliminate sciatica over time. If you're experiencing back pain, don't wait. **Call one of our physical therapists today and schedule your first appointment to have your condition assessed and your back pain treated, once and for all.**

## HEALTHY RECIPE

### Watermelon Cucumber Lime Refresher



#### INGREDIENTS

- Per each serving:
- ½ cucumber, diced
  - 3 cups watermelon, cubed
  - 2 limes, juiced

#### DIRECTIONS

Add the watermelon, cucumber, and lime juice to a blender, and blend until smooth. Using a mesh strainer, strain the juice over a large liquid measuring cup to remove the pulp. Use a spoon to help stir the pulp and press out the liquid. (Reserve the pulp to make pulp muffins!)

Source: [www.tasty.co/recipe/watermelon-cucumber-lime-juice](http://www.tasty.co/recipe/watermelon-cucumber-lime-juice)

## EXERCISE TO TRY AT HOME

### SEATED GENTLE SPINAL TWIST

Try this exercise to help relieve sciatic pain.

1. Start by sitting up straight with your legs together straight out in front of you.
2. Bend one knee and cross that leg over your straight leg.
3. Gently twist your upper body across your bent leg using one arm to balance on the floor and the other to pull your knee closer to your chest.



# 6



## NUTRITION TIPS FOR A HEALTHY SUMMER

Your diet affects many aspects of your well-being including your immune system, bone health, muscle function, inflammation and pain. Conditions including heart disease and diabetes are also impacted by dietary intake. In summer, it can be difficult to keep good nutrition at the forefront especially with barbecues and cookouts popping up everywhere you look! Here are 6 nutrition tips to help you maintain a healthy diet this season:

- 1. Swap out snacks for fruits and vegetables.** Consume at least 5 portions of a variety of fruits and vegetables daily. If this sounds challenging, remember that fresh, frozen, canned, dried, or even juiced fruits and veggies are all options.
- 2. Replace steak with fish.** Fish is a great source of protein and contains many vitamins and minerals. You should try to incorporate at least 2 servings of fish in your diet every week.
- 3. Reduce your saturated fat intake.** Too much saturated fat can raise your blood cholesterol levels, increasing your risk of developing heart disease. Examples of food high in saturated fat include fatty cuts of meat, sausages, butter, hard cheeses, cream, cakes and biscuits.
- 4. Cut down on sugary drinks.** Drinks high in sugar contribute to obesity and tooth decay. Try opting for a cool, refreshing glass of water instead, or a tasty fruit smoothie!
- 5. Drink enough water.** Proper hydration is always important, but even more so during hot weather. You should aim for 6 to 8 glasses of water a day.
- 6. Don't skip breakfast.** A healthy breakfast sets the tone for your day and gives you the energy you need to make it to lunch!

**We hope these tips will help you navigate the season and prioritize your health this summer!**

The physical therapists at Kintsugi Physical Therapy & Wellness can help you get stronger, healthier, and more active this summer. Call today!



## PATIENT EXPERIENCE

“ I graduated after 10 weeks, back and sciatic pain free. ”

*“I initially came in with unexplained back pain so bad that I couldn't bend forward from my center of gravity. I partnered with Aaron who worked like a detective to locate the where and the why of the pain, even as my back pain evolved into sciatic pains. I graduated after 10 weeks, back and sciatic pain free, with a plan in place to prevent future pains.” —Ina S.*



**We want to hear your PT Success Story!**

We appreciate hearing from you and will review your comments carefully. You're not only helping us, but our patients too!

Just scan the QR code and visit our review page.



**Thank You!**

## SPORTS INJURIES

If you have recently sustained a painful sports injury, stop trying to deal with it alone at home. Icing it will only go so far! Our physical therapists are highly trained movement specialists. Through physical evaluations, they will be able to examine your moving body in order to decide the best treatment plan for your specific needs.

**Contact Kintsugi Physical Therapy & Wellness today!**

## Has Your Pain Come Back? Come Back to PT!

1. Keep up with your physical therapy exercises to relieve pain and prevent further injuries.
2. If your pain doesn't subside, consult with your therapist about what other things might be causing your pain.
3. Contact Kintsugi Physical Therapy & Wellness for an appointment. We will guide you so you can get back to the activities you love.

**KintsugiPT.com**

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