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STAY IN THE GAME



Newsletter for all our Form & Function Family



Why Does Lower Back Pain Keep Coming Back? (Sciatica Explained)

You know the moment. You're tying your shoes, or reaching into the back seat of the car, or you stand up too fast after sitting through a long movie, and there it is. That familiar twinge, ache, or shooting pain down your leg that makes you freeze mid-motion and think, "Not this again."

For a lot of people, that moment isn't new. It's a repeat visitor. Maybe it first showed up years ago after a weekend of yard work, or it crept in slowly during a stressful season of long work hours and no exercise. Either way, it settled down eventually, and then came back. And came back again.

If this sounds familiar, you're not alone, and you're not broken. But you probably have some ideas about why this keeps happening that aren't quite accurate. Let's clear those up.

OVERVIEW:

- Why Does Lower Back Pain Keep Coming Back? (Sciatica Explained)
- Products We Love
- Monthly Offers
- Health Tips and Tricks
- Recipes We Love

A newsletter to our entire Form and Function Family to keep you updated on all the happenings in the clinic and to share helpful, entertaining information about your health and wellness. Find helpful tips and tricks on staying active and staying in the game, the game of life that is! We hope you enjoy this month's issue of Stay In The Game.

The Myth: "I Just Need to Rest It"

When back pain or sciatica flares up, the instinct is almost universal: stop moving, lie down, wait it out. It makes sense on the surface. It hurts, so don't do the thing that hurts. This is often reinforced by well-meaning friends, family members, or even things you've read online: "Take it easy." "Don't push it." "Let it heal."

But here's the problem: prolonged rest is often exactly what keeps the cycle going. Your spine and the nerves that run through it are designed for movement. Disks rely on motion to stay hydrated and healthy, almost like a sponge that needs to be squeezed and released to draw in fluid. Muscles need regular activation to support your spine properly and keep the joints in your lower back moving the way they're supposed to. When you rest

too long, you're not giving your back a chance to heal. You're letting supporting muscles get weaker and stiffer, and often making the surrounding tissue more sensitive, not less. There's also a psychological piece to this that doesn't get talked about enough. When you're told to rest and protect your back, it's easy to start associating movement itself with danger. Bending starts to feel scary. Lifting starts to feel risky. And the less you move, the more guarded and protective your body becomes, which often makes things worse rather than better.

This is one of the most common myths we see: that back pain equals damage, and damage means you should stop moving until it "fixes itself." In reality, most flare-ups are far more about movement dysfunction and muscle imbalance than any

structural damage that requires rest to heal.

What's Actually Happening When Sciatica Flares Up

Sciatica isn't really its own condition. It's a symptom. It happens when the sciatic nerve, which runs from your lower back down through your hip and leg, gets irritated or compressed somewhere along its path. This can come from tight muscles pressing on the nerve, a slightly bulging disk, or lower back joints that aren't moving well.

In most cases, this irritation isn't a sign of something broken. It's a sign that something around the nerve, whether that's muscles, joints, or movement patterns, isn't doing its job, and the nerve is reacting to that stress. Think of it less like a structural failure and more like a smoke alarm going off. The pain is the alarm. The real question is what's causing the smoke, whether that's a stiff hip, weak

Benefits of PEMF

There are both short term and long term benefits of PEMF therapy. Short form transformation benefits include:

- Alleviation of pain and inflammation
- Enhanced range of motion
- Swift recovery of functional abilities
- Prevention of muscle atrophy post-surgery
- Strengthened ligaments
- Expedited healing of skin wounds and nerve regeneration
- Utilizing guided PEMF therapy can also have extended benefits that include:
- Boosted energy, circulation, and oxygenation of blood and tissue
- Improved sleep quality, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels
- Balanced immune system and accelerated cell regeneration
- Muscle relaxation

As you can see, there are many benefits of utilizing PEMF therapy and the experts at Form & Function PT are happy to help you realize them through our guided PEMF therapy.

glutes, or years of sitting that left certain muscles tight and others switched off.

None of this shows up on a scan, which is part of why so many people hear "some wear and tear, normal for your age" and walk away more confused than before.

Why It Keeps Coming Back

If the underlying issue was never addressed, the alarm system is still primed to go off. Weak stabilizing muscles, poor movement patterns, and stiff joints don't fix themselves just because the pain quiets down. The irritation calms, but the conditions that caused it are often still there, waiting for the next trigger, whether that's a long car ride, an awkward lift, or a rough night's sleep.

Rest and pain relief can quiet the alarm temporarily. But without addressing why it went off in the first place, it's only a matter of time before it happens again. Unplugging a smoke alarm doesn't solve the problem in the kitchen. It

just means you won't hear about it next time.

This is also why back pain often feels unpredictable, fine for weeks, then triggered by something as small as a grocery bag or a sneeze.

That's usually a sign the underlying issue has been quietly building in the background the whole time.

The Reassuring Truth

Here's what I want you to take away from all this: recurring lower back pain and sciatica are incredibly common, and in most cases, they are very fixable, not by resting more, and not by just masking the pain, but by understanding what your body is actually telling you and addressing it at the source.

You don't need to just live with this, and you don't need to accept that it'll "just keep happening" as you get older.

The good news is that movement patterns, strength, and mobility can all be changed at pretty much any age, with the right approach.

There's a clear, logical reason it keeps coming back, and an equally clear path to breaking the cycle. It's not about finding a magic stretch or a perfect posture. It's about understanding your body's specific pattern of compensation and addressing it directly.

This is exactly the kind of problem physical therapy is built to solve. Not the generic, one-size-fits-all version many people picture, but a real assessment of how you move, where you're compensating, and why that specific pattern is putting stress on your nerve in the first place. Once that root cause is identified, it can be retrained, strengthened, and corrected, so you're not just waiting for the next flare-up.

At the end of the day, your body isn't working against you. It's just asking for a better strategy. And once you understand what it's really telling you, the pattern starts to make a lot more sense.

If you're interested in booking a discovery visit with us. Call us at (888) 619-2885 for more information!

Product We Love



Pulsed Electromagnetic Field Therapy (PEMF)

PEMF therapy, originally approved in the 1970s for healing nonunion fractures, has since revealed its vast potential in addressing various health issues. This therapy not only accelerates healing from physical trauma and injuries but also aids in alleviating pain stemming from chronic conditions and degeneration. So, how does PEMF therapy work? It operates on the principle that every cell, atom, and chemical in our bodies functions through electromagnetic energy. Disruption in this energy flow can lead to impaired cell metabolism, contributing to various health issues. PEMF therapy aims to restore this balance, ensuring optimal cellular function and health.

PEMF therapy works by delivering healing electromagnetic frequencies directly to the cells. This process bypasses bodily barriers, reaching every cell, tissue, organ, and even bones

Promos of the Month



**25% Off Joint
NutraCare For First
Time Buyers On the
Website**



My Sciatic Pain Returned... What Now?

By: Trevor Field

The Pattern You Already Know Too Well

If you've dealt with lower back pain or sciatica more than once, you already know the pattern. It flares up, you back off activity, it eventually settles down, and life goes back to normal. Then weeks or months later, it's back. Bending to grab something off the floor, sitting through a long meeting, getting out of bed on a Monday morning, and there it is again.

This cycle is incredibly common, and if you've been living inside it for a while, you've probably been told a few things along the way: it's just part of getting older, you probably have some "wear and tear," or you just need to rest it and let it calm down.

Here's the problem: none of that actually explains why it keeps happening. And if the explanation doesn't hold up, the advice that comes with it probably won't fix the problem either.

The Myth of "Just Rest It"

Resting a flared-up back feels like the obvious move. It hurts, so you stop doing the thing that hurts. But prolonged rest is often exactly what keeps this cycle going.

Your spine is built for movement. Spinal disks rely on motion to stay hydrated, almost like a sponge that needs to be squeezed and released to draw in fluid. The muscles surrounding your spine need regular activation to actually support it. When you rest for too long, you're not giving your back a chance to heal. You're allowing the muscles that should be protecting your spine to get weaker, stiffer, and less capable of doing their job.

What's Actually Happening When Sciatica Flares Up

Sciatica isn't its own condition. It's a symptom. It occurs when the sciatic nerve, which runs from your lower back through your hip and down your leg, becomes irritated or compressed somewhere along its path. This irritation typically comes from tight or overactive muscles pressing on the nerve, a slightly bulging disk creating localized pressure, or stiff joints in the lower spine that aren't moving through their full range.

In most cases, this irritation is not a sign that something in your back is structurally broken. It's a sign that something around the nerve, whether that's muscle imbalance, joint stiffness, or a movement pattern that's putting uneven stress on the area, isn't functioning the way it should. If the underlying cause was never addressed, the conditions that triggered the original flare-up are usually still present, even after the pain quiets down. Weak stabilizing muscles, stiff joints, and poor movement patterns don't resolve themselves just because symptoms have settled.

The nerve irritation calms down, but the mechanical issue causing it doesn't disappear.

Rest, ice, heat, and pain relief can all help you get through a flare-up more comfortably. But none of them are designed to correct the actual muscular or movement-based issue causing the irritation in the first place. .

A Simple Self-Check You Can Try

Here's a low-risk way to start building awareness of how your body is moving.

Stand with your feet hip-width apart and slowly hinge forward at your hips, like a gentle forward bend, keeping your knees soft. Notice whether one side of your lower back feels tighter or more restricted than the other, and whether the movement feels smooth or like your lower back is doing all the work while your hips stay stiff.

You can also try standing on one leg for a few seconds, then switching sides. Notice if one side feels noticeably less stable than the other.

This isn't a diagnostic tool, and you shouldn't push through pain to complete it. It's simply a way to start noticing asymmetries or restrictions that might be contributing to the pattern you've been experiencing.

Recipe We Love *Mediterranean Salmon Baked in Foil*



Ingredients

- 4 (12x16-inch) rectangles aluminum foil
- 4 (6 to 8 ounce) salmon filets
- 3 tablespoons olive oil, or as needed, divided
- 1 teaspoon Greek seasoning
- 1 cup diced cherry or grape tomatoes
- 4 marinated artichoke hearts, quartered
- 3 tablespoons minced red onion
- 3 tablespoons halved, pitted Kalamata olives
- 1/2 lemon, zested and juiced
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley, plus parsley sprigs for garnish (optional)
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 lemon, cut into wedges (optional)

How to Make Mediterranean Salmon

- **Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C). Brush the center of each foil rectangle with a small amount of olive oil.**
- **Place a salmon filet in the center of each foil sheet. Brush filets lightly with olive oil; sprinkle with Greek seasoning.**
- **In a small bowl, combine tomatoes, artichokes, onion, olives, lemon zest and juice, minced parsley, balsamic vinegar, garlic, red pepper flakes, and 1 tablespoon olive oil. Season to taste with salt and pepper.**
- **Spoon tomato mixture evenly over filets. Pull the long ends of foil rectangles over filets and fold twice to crimp, with the foil not touching the contents. Lift each end of the packet and pinch closed.**
- **Place packets on a rimmed baking sheet.**
- **Bake in the center of the preheated oven for 12 to 15 minutes. An instant read thermometer, inserted into the center of filets through the foil packet, should read 145 degrees F (63 degrees C).**
- **To serve, place foil packs on serving plates. Open packets, drizzle with any remaining olive oil, garnish with parsley sprigs, and serve with lemon wedges.**