

How IDD Therapy® can help to relieve unresolved sciatica from a bulging disc

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There are a number of nerve roots that exit the low back and come together to form the sciatic nerve, which is travels through your buttock and down the back of your leg.



If the discs become weakened or too much force is exerted on them from certain twisting or awkward bending for example, the wall of the discs can bulge. A disc bulge, or herniation, where the walls of the disc are pushed outwards can put pressure on these nerves exiting the spinal cord.

Pressure on, or inflammatory irritation of the sciatic nerve from a bulging or herniated disc can cause intense pain traveling down the buttocks and legs. It can be a constant dull ache or feel like jolts of electricity.

Relieving sciatica

When pain strikes, the body will do the only thing it can; strongly contract muscles in that region to lock it down. This spasm is completely normal and prevents further movement. The reason is simple and primitive; when in pain the spasm will afford us some ability to hobble off to a safe place to lick our wounds and start recovering.

Physical therapy which combines hands-on treatment with stretches and strengthening exercises for the back, core muscles and the body as a whole, serves to improve the function of the spine and facilitate the body to heal.

Unresolved sciatica

The challenge arises when despite best efforts, the pain persists. At this stage **IDD Therapy non-surgical spinal decompression** is used within the treatment program.

IDD Therapy is delivered using an advanced machine called the ACCU SPINA which delivers a specific pulling force to the relevant area of the spine. Patients lie comfortably on a treatment couch and are connected to it with ergonomic harnesses around the hips and upper body.

Using physics and computer technology, IDD Therapy gives therapists a tool to take pressure off targeted spinal segments and at the same gently mobilize soft tissues to make them more flexible and thus encourage the body's natural healing mechanisms.

Treating targeted spinal segments

The ACCU SPINA applies a specific gentle pull via a belt attached to the pelvic harness. The angle at which the force is applied will determine where the pull will be focussed. This makes it possible to direct the pull to the segments which are most problematic.

The pulling force is brought on slowly and this opens the space between two vertebrae, thus taking pressure off the disc. As the space is opened, the ACCU SPINA then gently oscillates the force, that is, while maintaining a degree of tension, the force is brought on and off partially and this serves to work the tissues, whilst exposing the disc to a pumping type of motion that stimulates the passage of nutrients.

Controlled higher decompression forces

A key benefit of IDD Therapy is that the amount of force which is applied is far greater than can be applied with hands-on treatment, especially for the amount of time needed to bring about the change in the tissues. The forces used in IDD Therapy are built up to and over half a patient's body weight. This is a considerable weight to lift comfortably, let alone to be able to apply such force at a specific area of the spine.

Relieve pressure on the sciatic nerve

During IDD Therapy, pressure is taken off the disc. With some patients, the reduced pressure can allow the body to retract the disc bulge and, in some cases, the pain from pressure on the nerve can disappear quite quickly.

Typically, however it does take more time as the body adapts to the treatment and function is improved. As mobility increases and the spinal structures are better able to move, the body's natural healing mechanisms can operate more efficiently.

By addressing the whole area with IDD Therapy, hands on treatment and exercise, therapists have far greater ability to resolve persistent sciatica from a disc bulge.

Creating a platform for long term activity

Many people in pain are caught in a vicious cycle. The level of stiffness and pain make it very difficult to move and can lead to an avoidance mentality, where people are afraid of the consequences of moving. As we have seen, the body needs movement and the longer pain persists, the harder it can become to move and of course, our motivation to move decreases.

By breaking this cycle, people can learn to have confidence in their ability to move and then go on and commit to some physical exercise.

Of course, for some patients a condition may not fully resolve but achieving a level of pain reduction and improved mobility can still be life changing.

~Written by Richard Hughes, MCSP