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## **The 7 Non-Invasive Measures that Reduce and Eliminate Low Back Pain and Sciatica** **BY: Dr Lorri A Lankiewicz (DPT, MPT, AT, PC, NNC)**

If you are currently suffering with Low Back Pain (LBP) & Sciatica or have in the past, you know that it can be debilitating. You may not know the actual stats that show that LBP & Sciatica is an epidemic:

- \*8 of 10 Americans will experience Low Back Pain (LBP)
- \*LBP affects more women than men
- \*31% of men & 20% of women report when LBP affects their work
- \*54% of desk workers report LBP
- \*50% of pregnant women have LBP
- \*\$50 Billion per year is spent on treating LBP
- \*\$100 Billion per year is spent indirectly on LBP (lost wages, etc)

Of those reporting LBP & Sciatica:

- \*90% of the cases resolved in 6 weeks
- \*60-80% have a recurrence in 2 years
- \*7% develop chronic LBP

(<https://www.thegoodbody.com/back-pain-statistics/>, Last Update May 3, 2017)

### **Three Main Causes of LBP & Sciatica: 1.Disc Herniation 2.Arthritis/DDD 3. Sacroiliac Dysfunction**

**7 Non-Invasive measures** are available to reduce and eliminate your LBP & save you time and money:

1. **Physical Therapy**- utilized early on in the pain cycle, reduces costs and improves function more than a visit to MD, imaging, medications & surgery.  
<http://www.apta.org/PTinMotion/News/2015/3/18/LBPUtilizationAndPT/>
  - The initial evaluation can provide information to determine the cause of the pain and what treatment method will produce significant results
2. **Deep Tissue Laser Therapy** (Class IV)- known as light therapy has been proven to reduce all of the symptoms associated with LBP efficiently & effectively. Like photosynthesis (sunlight to a plant), Deep Tissue Laser treatments provide 'photo-bio-modulation', "a therapeutic dose of light to impaired or dysfunctional tissue leads to a cellular response that reduces pain and inflammation and speeds healing". <http://www.litecure.com>
3. **Nutritional Supplements** – there are numerous supplements that can help to alleviate the symptoms associated with LBP & Sciatica. We have found this combination to have the most effective results:
  - **Gotu Kola (Standard Process/Medi-Herb)** - improves circulation, connective tissue & capillary healing at the injured joint/disc site. <https://www.standardprocess.com>
  - **Ligaplex I (Standard Process)** - natural anti-inflammatory, supports normal connective tissue repair, healthy joints, muscles and cartilage repair
  - **Boswellia, Turmeric, Glucosamine, Hemp Oil Complex (Medi-Herb/Standard Process)** – natural anti-inflammatory herbs & Fatty Acids that assist the above two in decreasing inflammation to repair tissue. [www.standardprocess.com](http://www.standardprocess.com).
  - **CBD (Hemp) Oil**- ongoing support for inflammation reduction, tissue healing, healthy joints and improved circulation. [www.drlorrihealth.com](http://www.drlorrihealth.com)

## The 6 Non-Invasive Measures that Reduce & Eliminate Low Back Pain & Sciatica

4. **Therapeutic Exercises** – prescribed during a Physical Therapy Plan of Care. These exercises are taught to improve flexibility from head to toe, improve core strengthening, improve joint mobility and balance. Specific exercises called “Twists & Kicks” along with a Psoas (hip flexor) stretch are taught immediately at our clinic to reduce LBP & Sciatica
5. **ICE** – yes ICE. Most people do not like ICE because it is cold. It is our #1 “go to” modality for pain & inflammation reduction. Reusable Ice Packs that stay cold for at least 30 minutes are optimal. ICE truly is your friend with pain.
6. **TENS unit** – (Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation) is a mobile relief machine that helps to reduce pain by sending an electrical current to the nerve synapse. Each nerve connects to another in an arrowhead to tail like fashion. Pain occurs at the point where one arrowhead connects with the tail of another arrow. The current sent to this area sends a message to relax the activity at that synapse.
7. **Therapeutic Cupping:** is a type of alternative therapy that originated in China. It involves placing cups on the skin to create suction to increase blood flow. The suction and negative pressure provided by cupping can loosen muscles and calm the nervous system. Cupping is used to relieve back and neck pain, “un-snap” fascia and decrease fatigue, migraines, rheumatism and possibly cellulite.

Any or all of these measures can be used individually or in conjunction with the others. The most important thing is to find out why you have the LBP & Sciatica and then create a plan to stop the symptoms.

**The Sure Fire way** to do this is with a comprehensive Physical Therapy Evaluation. Our therapists will ask a lot of questions so that they understand when, where and how your pain began. They will then guide you through multiple “hands-on/special tests” to diagnose your injury (Disc herniation, DDD/ arthritis, SI dysfunction) and to determine your current state of function. They will then create a plan to reduce your pain and get you back on your feet. That plan will include recommendations for the other Non-Invasive Measures to reduce & eliminate your LBP & Sciatica.

Complaints of LBP & Sciatica can be heard everyday at home, the office, on the street, on the golf course and in any social setting. Many people will choose to do nothing and simply live with the pain. **Others will try multiple services and when they do not feel relief, they opt for surgery.** Per one study (and there are others), the results post surgery were average: *At the 5-year follow-up, the “average” patient experienced frequent, but relatively low levels of pain and moderate disability.* <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2989258/> **WHY? = wrong diagnosis (SI Joint)!**

**The majority of people do not know that you can schedule directly with your physical therapist for evaluation and treatment.** <http://www.apta.org/StateIssues/DirectAccess/Overview/>. In other words, no referral is necessary. Many studies show that using physical therapy before any other intervention (MD consult, x-ray, MRI, medications, home remedies) saves time & money. <https://www.medrisknet.com/statistics-spotlight-physical-therapy-reduces-costs/>. Most importantly, PT helps to return a person to normal function quicker than any other intervention. A PT treatment plan will also help to prevent further injury by teaching stretching, strengthening, & balance techniques along with postural awareness and the plan will include educating clients about the non-invasive measures to reduce pain when it arises.

**It is your health and your choice! If you would like to save time & money while reducing the debilitating affects of LBP & Sciatica, these 7 Non-Invasive Measures (beginning with the Comprehensive Physical Therapy Evaluation) are the right choice for you.**

*Dr Lorri Lankiewicz is the PRES/CEO of Fyzical Therapy & Balance Centers & Balance For Wellness Academy, Inc in Butler Pa. She has over 20 years experience in the PT outpatient field and has taught many clients & her staff how to reduce and eliminate back pain. You can reach her office at: 724-481-1141*