



NEWSLETTER

Your #1 Health and Wellness Resource

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At ARC Physical Therapy, we offer a proven approach to back pain and sciatica.



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BACK PAIN & SCIATICA

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THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BACK PAIN & SCIATICA

Have you been told your persistent lower back pain is really sciatica? Did you know specific signs and symptoms can clarify what condition you're dealing with? Far too often, these terms are used interchangeably or, worse yet, inaccurately. Fortunately, at ARC Physical Therapy, our skilled physical therapists can clear it up for you and set you on the right path to relief!

Back pain and sciatica can be confusing and even intimidating, especially when you're not sure what's causing your discomfort. Whether from a car accident, lifting something heavy, or seemingly out of nowhere, both back pain and sciatica seem to have similar causes and even share some symptoms.

That's where physical therapy comes in. Physical therapy is highly effective for both conditions. It helps reduce pain, improves mobility, and, most importantly, tackles the underlying issues to prevent future discomfort. With a tailored treatment plan, you can get back to doing what you love, pain-free.

can arise from muscle strains, herniated discs, or prolonged poor posture.

Sciatica, on the other hand, is more specific and involves pain that travels along the sciatic nerve. This nerve starts in the lower back and runs through the hips and buttocks down to each leg. The pain you feel could be shooting, burning, or even tingling, and it usually affects just one side of your body. To be a "true" sciatica, nerve symptoms must be felt in the leg (specifically below the knee).

Continued inside.

Understanding the Difference Between Back Pain and Sciatica

Back pain and sciatica are sometimes used interchangeably, but they're not the same. Lower back pain is generally localized, affecting the lumbar region of the spine. It



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Common Causes of Back Pain and Sciatica

- **Lower Back Pain:** In most cases, lower back pain is caused by factors such as muscle strain, herniated discs, degenerative disc disease, arthritis, and other conditions.
- **Sciatica:** Most commonly caused by a herniated disc, bone spur where the nerve exits the spine, or narrowing of the spine (spinal stenosis) compressing part of the nerve.

Classic Symptoms of Back Pain and Sciatica

- **Lower Back Pain:** May include stiffness, muscle spasms, and difficulty in moving.
- **Sciatica:** Must consist of symptoms along the nerve root in the leg and typically include numbness, tingling, or muscle weakness in the affected leg or foot, in addition to pain.

It's crucial to know the difference between the two because the treatment approaches differ. For example, sciatica might require attention to nerve compression issues, while lower back pain could be more muscle-related.

So, if you're tired of enduring persistent pain, take action and call to schedule an appointment with our spine experts. Let us help you understand your condition and guide you toward effective relief.

Our Approach to Assessment and Treatment at ARC Physical Therapy

If you are experiencing back pain or sciatica, it's time to take action. Working with our experienced therapists can help you understand what you are dealing with and, most importantly, how to resolve it once and for all! Whether

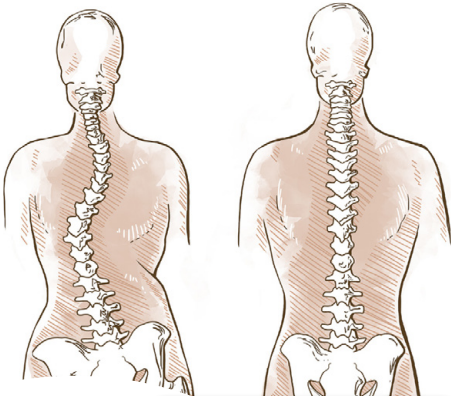
you come to our clinic with lower back pain or sciatica, we will perform a thorough physical examination and medical history to provide you with solutions that work based on the findings.

- **Education:** Understanding what you are experiencing and how to manage it can help you be proactive and find a solution. Understanding what is going on and, more importantly, what you can do about it is one of the most effective solutions. Our physical therapists will make sure you have the information you need to be successful.
- **Manual therapy:** Manual therapies include a variety of methods, including joint mobilizations and manipulations that move one or more joints within normal ranges of motion to improve spinal joint motion or function. Our physical therapists may also use soft tissue techniques like myofascial release, trigger point releases, and other methods to help alleviate pain and allow for more mobility and improved function.
- **Targeted Exercises:** Our exercise programs include mobility exercises, proper postural exercises, nerve mobilization, or strength exercises. Our physical therapists will tailor your workouts, monitor you, and progress based on your individual needs.

Your well-being is our top priority. At ARC Physical Therapy, we offer a proven approach to back pain and sciatica. Don't let pain hold you back any longer. Call today and take the first step toward a pain-free life.

Sources: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/2291226/> • <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5088108/> • <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5251828/>

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HOME EXERCISE

CAT COW FLOW

Begin on your hands and knees in table pose, with a neutral spine. As you inhale and move into cow pose, lift your sit bones upward, press your chest forward and allow your belly to sink. Lift your head, relax your shoulders away from your ears, and gaze straight ahead. As you exhale, come into cat pose while rounding your spine outward, tucking in your tailbone, and drawing your pubic bone forward. Release your head toward the floor.



RUNNING & BACK PAIN

A Quick Dive

Do you notice more back pain when on your long runs? Are you frustrated with tightness in your back limiting your runs? We can help identify the source of your pain and get you running pain-free again! At ARC Physical Therapy, our physical therapists are experts at treating lower back pain. Just about everyone deals with low back pain at one point. For some, the lucky ones, the pain lasts just a few days. For others, the low back pain lingers for years and never really goes away completely. It is estimated that up to 80 % of all adults experience lower back pain some time in their lives.

Surprisingly, studies have demonstrated that running seems to protect people from back pain. In addition, the main reasons for runners to experience lower back pain are often related to training mistakes and, at times, easy to identify. At ARC Physical Therapy, we are experts at treating lower back pain and have solutions that will work for you. Call today to request an appointment with one of our highly trained therapists and let us help you run pain-free again!

Common Causes of Back Pain In Runners

One of the biggest challenges in treating back pain is the lack of consistent risk factors, especially for first-time low back pain episodes. It is often concluded that the main reason for back pain is no apparent reason. The most reliable predictor of future lower back pain is a previous episode. Once someone experiences back pain, they are likely to experience another episode. Running is one of the most popular activities for physical and mental well-being. The benefits of running are numerous; unfortunately, running is also ripe with injuries, including back pain while running and after running.

Back pain in runners seems to be related to gait issues or muscles fatigue/activation issues. The most common risk factors associated with running include:

- History of running for more than six years
- Body Mass Index (BMI) > 24 (i.e., overweight)
- Deconditioned or adding mileage too far too fast
- Restricted hip flexion range of motion
- Restrictions in spine mobility

Request an Appointment Today!

At ARC Physical Therapy, our physical therapists have experience working with runners dealing with lower back pain. Our goal is to get you running pain-free again!

Call our clinic today to schedule an appointment
with one of our specialists!

Request an Appointment



RUNNER'S PROGRAM



Inefficient running form can lead to an overuse of one or more areas of the body, leading to pain and dysfunction. Most of these injuries will eventually heal in a runner is given the appropriate exercises to eliminate the imbalance. Our physical therapists are highly trained medical professionals with vast knowledge of human anatomy, joint and body mechanics, flexibility and strength relationships.

Runner's Evaluation

(Getting to the Root of the Problem)

The Runner's Evaluation is a comprehensive, whole body scan which includes:

- Body alignment and posture
- Flexibility testing
- Strength testing
- Balance assessment
- Running gait assessment

The information from the evaluation is used to develop and individual program to correct the deficits that were found. If needed, the physical therapist will provide a referral to a Sports Medicine Physician.

COME BACK TO ARC PT!

- Has a pain returned?
- Are you suffering from a new pain?
- Do you want to be healthier, stronger, and more active?

If you answered yes to any of these questions you need to come back to ARC Physical Therapy. Call us today!

Call for an appointment today and start your journey to a healthier, happier, pain-free life.

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