

Your Sciatica Relief Guide

Simple, honest steps to calm nerve pain running down your leg — and how to know when it needs a closer look.

Sciatica is pain that travels — it radiates from the low back or buttock down one leg, often past the knee, and can come with tingling, numbness, or weakness along the way. That's the sign a nerve, not just a muscle, is irritated. The reassuring part: most sciatica isn't dangerous and eases steadily with a few sensible habits and conservative care. Here's where to start.

Feel better starting today

- 1 Stay gently active.** Long bed rest tends to make an irritated nerve worse, not better. Pain-free movement and a short daily walk, within comfort, usually help more than lying still.
- 2 Break up long sitting.** Sitting raises pressure on the low back and buttock and flares most causes of sciatica. Stand, walk, or shift position every half hour or so, and support your low back when you're seated.
- 3 Use heat or ice.** Ice can calm a fresh flare in the first day or two; heat relaxes the tight, guarding muscles that build up around an irritated nerve. Use whichever feels better, about 15 minutes at a time.
- 4 Avoid what flares the leg.** Notice which positions set off your leg symptoms — forward bending, a deep chair, a particular stretch — and ease off them for now. When you lift, hinge at the hips and keep the load close instead of rounding your back.
- 5 Support your sleep.** A neutral position, often on your side with a pillow between your knees (or on your back with one under your knees), takes pressure off the low back overnight.

What's usually behind it

- **Herniated disc** — the most common cause; a low-back disc bulges and presses on a nearby nerve root.
- **Spinal stenosis** — age-related narrowing of the spine leaves less room for the nerves, common in older adults.

- **Piriformis muscle** — a tight buttock muscle squeezes the sciatic nerve as it passes beneath, often with long sitting.
- **Posture & load** — years of sitting, lifting, or a slipped vertebra add up and crowd where the nerve exits the spine.

⚠ **Seek emergency care right away if...**

- You have **numbness in the saddle area** (groin, buttocks, or inner thighs)
- You've **lost bladder or bowel control**, or can't urinate
- You have **new weakness or numbness in both legs**
- You have **rapidly progressing or severe leg weakness** (for example, a foot that drops or drags)

These can signal serious pressure on the nerve bundle at the base of the spine (cauda equina) — go to an emergency department, don't wait it out. Also see someone promptly if sciatica follows a major fall or accident, or comes with fever, unexplained weight loss, or a history of cancer.

How we help at Thrive

At Thrive Chiropractic in Troy, care for sciatica is conservative and built around your exam — the goal is to take pressure off the irritated nerve and calm the leg symptoms with the least invasive approach that works for you. Dr. Rubinstein starts by finding the cause, then typically combines **gentle chiropractic adjustments** to restore motion where the spine is stiff, **soft-tissue and massage therapy** to release the tight muscles and protective spasm around the nerve, and **posture and activity coaching** so the strain doesn't simply rebuild. When a disc is involved, **spinal decompression** is often part of the plan. Left unaddressed, the underlying spinal subluxation and nerve irritation tend to keep flaring.

We're honest about what's realistic: this relieves pain and helps you move better over a series of visits as the nerve settles — it isn't a one-time cure, and if your exam shows worsening or progressing weakness, we'll say so plainly and arrange the right referral. You'll get a specific plan and timeline after your exam.

Call us

(248) 574-9355

Online

thrivechiropractictroy.com

Visit us

2133 Crooks Road, Troy, MI 48084

Book a visit

thrivechiropractictroy.com/schedule

Medical disclaimer: This guide is general educational information from Thrive Chiropractic of Troy and is not medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. It doesn't replace a visit with a qualified healthcare provider. Sciatica has many causes; please see a professional for advice about your specific situation, and seek emergency care for any of the warning signs above. © Thrive Chiropractic of Troy.