

GRIDHRASI (SCIATICA)

The word '*Gridhrasi*' is derived from the root word '*Gridhra*' which means the bird '*vulture*'. It's observed that in this disease the patient's gait is altered as his legs become tense and slightly curved due to pain. Ultimately, the patient walks similar to the walk of the vulture (*gridhra*). Hence it's named as '*Gridhrasi*'. It's named as one among 80 types of '*vata*'.

Sciatica refers to pain or discomfort with the sciatic nerve. Sciatic nerve is the largest single nerve in the body. This nerve runs from the lower part of the spinal cord down the back and side of the leg to the foot. It's derived from spinal nerves L5-S3. It serves a vital role in connecting the spinal cord with the leg and foot muscles. Injury or pressure on the sciatic nerve can cause the characteristic pain of sciatica.

❖ CAUSES OF SCIATICA

- Bulging disc or herniated disc: when a disc bulges, the gel-like center (nucleus pulposus) pushes breaks through the annulus fibrous which can press on nerve roots.
- Degenerative Disc Disease: Sciatica is a common result of the aging process that affects discs called degenerative disc disease. It is a change in the disc shape and function, and it can results in bulging disc or herniated disc and pain.
- Sciatica can also be triggered by faulty posture methods like sleeping in a curved position, slumping on a chair, falls, accidents, infections, tumors etc.
- Piriformis syndrome: The piriformis muscle, located in the lower part of the spine, connects to the thighbone, and helps rotate your hip. A spasmodic contraction of the piriformis muscle can strangle the nearby sciatic nerve, resulting in pains of pseudo sciatica. This is known as the piriformis syndrome.

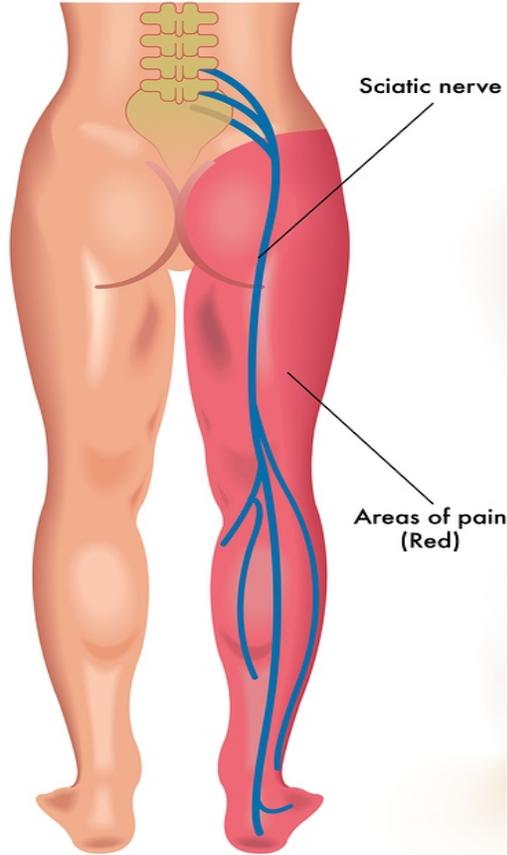


As per Ayurveda, Sciatica is caused by vitiation of *vata* (dosha responsible movement) and sometimes even *kapha* (dosha responsible for movement) vitiation along with *vata*.

SYMPTOMS OF SCIATICA

- Lower back pain
- Pain that radiates through one buttock and down the back of the adjoining leg.
- The pain described as tingling, burning, prickly, aching or stabbing.

SCIATICA



❖ MANAGEMENT

As its one among *vata* disorders, all *vata* pacifying measures should be undertaken. Main principle of treatment for sciatica in ayurveda is *swedanam* (fomentation), *snehanam* (oleation) and *virechanam* (purgation).

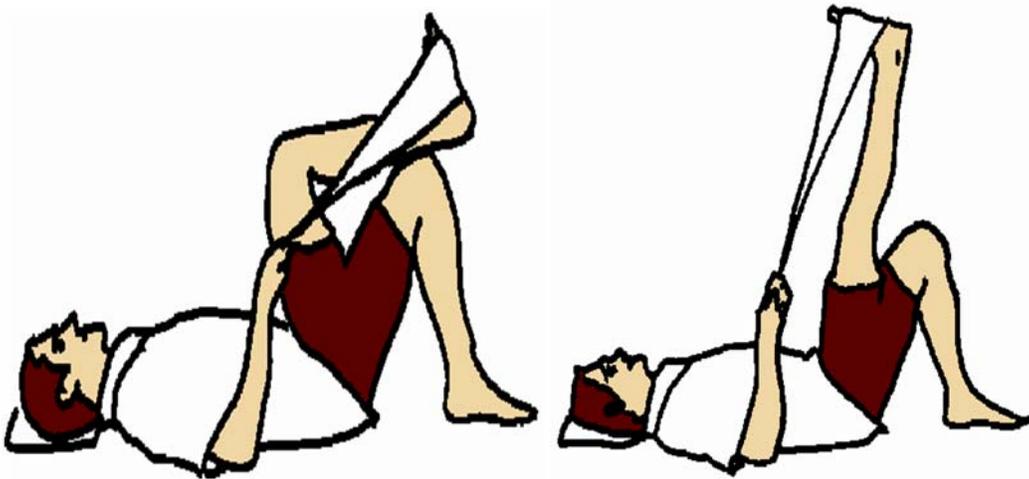
- *Snehana*- application, sprinkling or pouring of oil over the affected area may be carried out.
- *Swedanam*- *pizichil*, *avagaha swedam*, *pinda swedam*, *upanaha swedam* etc.
- *Virechanam*- purgation according to patient condition.
- *Basti* (medicated enema)
- *Agni karma* (cauterization)-in the severe painful area or near the little toe of the leg, using a metallic rod.

❖ IMPORTANT HERBS USEFUL IN SCIATICA

- **Eranda:** *eranda* is the preferred herb to treat sciatic fever and pain. This is given to the patients in the form of linctus which is called ***Eranda paka*** in ayurveda. Two teaspoonfuls of this is given to the patient with a cup of warm water or milk. It helps as a natural laxative and helps those patients who are suffering from constipation.
- **Guggulu:** *guggulu* is another herb of choice to treat all kind of pains initiated from the nervous system.
- **Nirgundi:** It acts as a laxative, pain killer and anti-inflammatory action. It's a wonderful drug in sciatica.
- **Shallaki:** The gum of the *shallaki* is known to have anti-inflammatory properties when it's applied externally.

❖ STRETCHING EXERCISE FOR SCIATICA

- **Hamstring stretching:** most types of sciatica will benefit from a regular routine of hamstring stretching. The hamstrings are muscles located in the back of the thigh. Overly tight hamstrings increase the stress on the low back and often aggravate or even cause some of the conditions that result in sciatica.

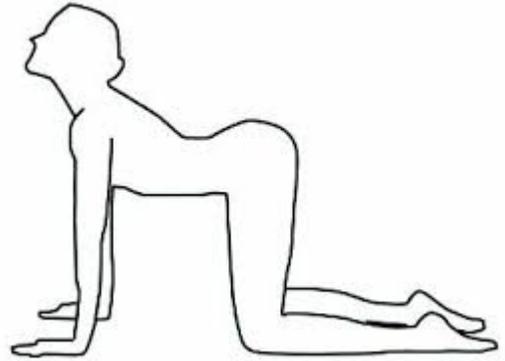


❖ **YOGA FOR SCIATICA**

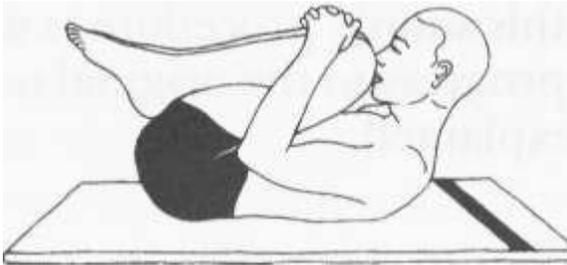
- *Kandhara asana*



- *Marjari asana*



- *Pavana mukta asana*



- *Vyaghra asana*



- *Dhanurasana*



- *Garuda asana*

