

Wendy Schulze

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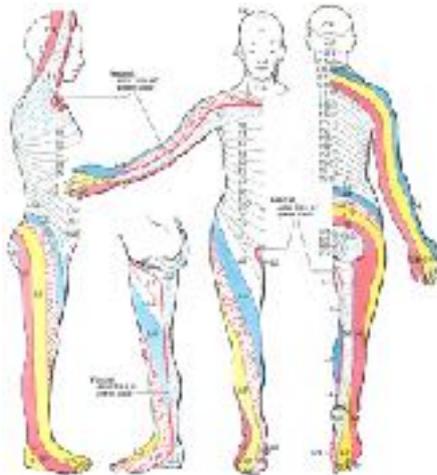
Low Back Anterior Disc Protrusion

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If you are a person with back pain then it could be from your lumbar disc. You need to feel confident in the anatomy, physiology and exercises and how they work so that you heal your disc and get your spine flexible again.

Disc Pain – how does it behave?

Disc pain is an intermittent deep dull ache with a nerve like feeling like a toothache, there may or may not be tingling, pins and needles sensations, hot or cold, numbness or in extreme cases weakness. Very occasionally the pain can be constant.



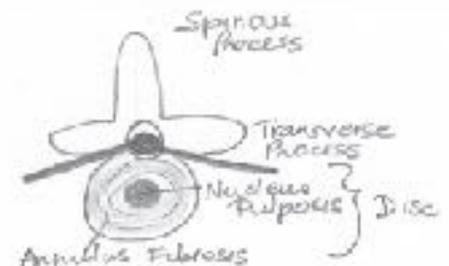
The area of pain is important for the diagnosis of disc injuries — it will follow the distinct pattern of a nerve root. If you want to find out your level of disc injury take a look at this dermatome chart.

Sometimes there is no inflammation so the pain is a searing jolt in certain postures as the disc is trapped.

The pain is better initially with rest or gentle movement. It gets worse with prolonged rest or movement — this means that it is often painful and stiff in the mornings or after sitting. It is always worse with prolonged or heavy movement.

When you get up from sitting it is often tight, painful or “gluey” for a minute or two as you straighten. When the pressure is taken off the disc the referred pain (leg pain) immediately eases —this is your body telling you to do that movement.

This picture on the right shows the anatomy of a disc with the gluey nucleus pulposus surrounded by the fibrous annulus fibrosus.



Disc Creep - Nucleus Tracking



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When a person is in good posture the nucleus pulposis sits centrally as in the first picture showing the spine from the side. When you bend forward it tracks backwards. When you bend backwards it tracks forward.

This is normal and natural — it also tracks from side to side.

In our culture we now sit more than at anytime in human history (school, university, cars, computer, TV, travel, airplanes, etc.) so our nucleus is often bulging back and this creates tiny tears in the annulus.

The nerve and blood supply of a disc

The disc has no nerve supply so you can be tearing your disc without knowing. One day you do something and these tears join up and you get a bulge. The bulge then presses against soft tissue that has a very good nerve supply and then you get pain.

This will cause inflammation of the soft tissues and nerve root. Much of the pain could simply be just inflammation, you can have a minor bulge with lots of inflammation that is extremely painful.



Exercises for your disc

Just as you can have bad habits that push the nucleus into a bulge you can have good exercises that push the nucleus back into place. This exercise can help you to push your bulge back in.

Before exercising check how much movement you have without pain while bending side to side, forwards and backwards.

The exercise is called “the cobra” in yoga. If the pain is unilateral (one sided) have your legs *to the side of pain*. If it is bilateral (both sides) then keep the legs straight.



Push up until you get a “good hurt” but not into pain. (The edge in yoga) If you push into pain you will make yourself worse because you will cause your big back muscles to go into spasm.

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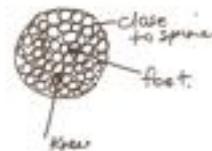
Feel your body and be gentle with yourself, just push up to the first bit of pain. If the push up is too painful then relax and use an anti-inflammatory cream or an ice pack for 30 minutes and then try again the next day.

Do the exercise ten times. Then get up and see if you can move more freely. If you are able to move better then repeat the exercise up to three times. (30 exercises in total)

If you do too much you may cause inflammation so just do a bit at a time.

Centralizing the Pain

Each nerve root is a bundle of small nerve fibers. The most outer fibers supply the parts close to the spinal cord and the inner fibers supply the foot. This means that the further down the leg your pain goes the worse the injury. Your job is to centralize the pain doing the exercises.

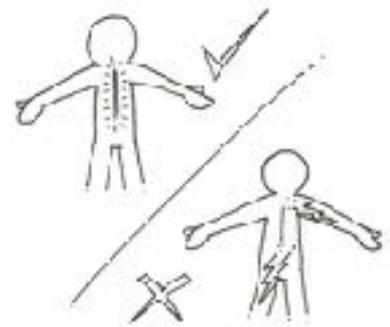


IMPORTANT !!! - The pain must to CENTRALIZE.

It is even OK if you feel that “the exercises have fixed my leg but you have ruined my back.”

This is great news. The back pain is easy to fix and will settle easily with Physiotherapy (ultrasound, movement, dry needle acupuncture etc.) time or massage.

The disc has no direct blood supply so relies on movement to remove waste and bring in fresh nutrition. Therefore it takes much longer than a muscle to heal. Therefore keep doing the exercises for at least six weeks *after all the pain has eased*.



The leg pain is a real problem and could lead to AN OPERATION if you don't do the exercises and you keep the habits you had that caused the bulge in the first place.

Eventually it will sequestrate and this means that it will burst. This is a disaster, but in three months your marvellous body will absorb most of the nucleus material and you will get better,

However, nowadays with such an over supply of money in medicine you will feel that you have to have surgery to remove this disc material then you will be on the roller coaster of putting

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your life in the hands of others with surgery, scar tissue etc. With that said if the bulge is huge you may need to have surgery.

If the leg pain gets worse in your leg stop doing the exercise and get professional help you will either have a huge bulge, it would have burst or you may have an anterior protrusion.

Spinal Posture



There are three natural curves and this allows your spine to have spring. You put pressure on a disc when sitting at the computer, in cars, in flights, in front of TV etc. If you have good posture you will have these curves in all positions including in sitting.

This supports your disc to be healthy. When sitting use a support in your low back to keep the lowest curve and this will cause good posture for your whole spine. There is no point in doing this exercise only to sit in poor posture and make it bulge again.

Disc Nutrition and Time to Heal

The disc has no direct blood supply so relies on movement to remove waste and bring in fresh nutrition. Therefore it takes much longer than a muscle to heal. Therefore keep doing the exercises for at least six weeks after all the pain has eased.

Anterior Protrusion

Every now and again the disc protrudes in the other direction so if you find that you are not able to centralise the pain after dealing with your inflammation then stop the exercises and see a professional.



General Health

Your body requires nutrients, exercise and the correct belief to heal.

Your body becomes acidic if you have too much of a Western Lifestyle. This is too little exercise, processed food and high chemical exposure.

[Wim Hof's course](#) is a great way to kick start your body into getting a better pH. The breathing exercises have been scientifically validated to create a more alkaline body.

If you want to know more about pH and how you can get healthier cells see [my website](#).

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Nutrients - If you eat processed food you will not have the building blocks for healing. You need certain minerals, vitamins and other nutrients for your nerves and muscles and other body systems to work correctly.

Exercises - Your body thrives on exercise so at the very least 10 minutes of exercise that makes you really puff and sweat every two days. Much more is heaps better. I personally run 5 kilometres with 30 second sprints twice a week, windsurf, cycle and go for long walks, plus since I have completed the 10 week Wim Hof course I have included Wim's yoga exercises twice weekly. Exercise stimulates your cardio-vascular system and releases all those toxins of a Western Lifestyle.

Belief - Finally focus on health, healing and feeling strong. Create the faith that you can overcome your problem.

This means taking your focus from your pain (what you don't want) onto what you do want.

Most of us want health and a comfortable body in which to live. Become sensitive to your body and you will be rewarded.

Your body can only speak to you through pain and pleasure. Reach for the pleasure — do what feels right for you and over time you will be rewarded.