



Wellbeing Clinic Newsletter

Today's Focus:

SCIATICA – NO NEED TO GO ANYWHERE WITH A SMALL HARD BALL (OR OTHER CONTRAPTIONS)

As it turns out The Guardian never ceases to supply us with interesting health related news. This article advocates using some unconventional methods to help with sciatic pain <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/article/2024/aug/08/i-have-sciatica-now-i-never-go-anywhere-without-a-small-hard-ball> . Whilst the article is presented in a light-hearted, humoristic tone, it does reflect the level of despair some sciatica sufferers experience on a daily basis, somewhat unnecessarily in our view. Since dealing with sciatica is our job, we felt obliged to speak out.

In case you didn't have time to read the above article in full, we will summarise it for you. The author has listed the following "routes to relief" from sciatica they have discovered, in order of preference/perceived efficiency:

1. Never sit down – impractical
2. Being "brutalised" by a certain Bulgarian masseur – "challenging" and "too expensive" experience
3. Sit on a hard ball – solution recommended by "a physio friend".

Out of the three solutions listed the ball "slipped under my left cheek" apparently provides "relief so intense that I was almost glad I had sciatica – if I hadn't had it I may never have known this joy".

The article then goes on to describe how the author has now become a connoisseur of all sorts of "balls for bum cheeks" including baseball balls, hockey balls, golf balls, cricket balls and so on, used depending on softness of the seat they sit on, including car seats, kitchen chairs etc. We really do hope they do not sit on a ball whilst driving! Judging from the article the author is quite enthusiastic about this method, but let's face it, is this person really going to hang out with an assortment of balls for the rest of their life? Funny enough, they only hope for some temporary relief and do not even venture contemplating a possibility of any more permanent solution. This really shows how bad things must be for some people with sciatica. The author would perhaps be even more relieved if they knew that it is in fact possible to deal with sciatica in

a much more reliable way. We did say time and time again in our various publications that we are experts in back pain problems. Sciatica is one of the most common conditions we treat on a daily basis, so we can speak fully from our own, very rich experience.

With the right TCM skill set it is possible to treat sciatica very efficiently, not only achieving temporary relief from pain but in many cases also a full recovery from the condition. Sciatic pain originates from an inflammation of a disc between vertebrae of lower back, usually due to injury or lifestyle factors. The inflamed disc becomes swollen and as a result rubs or compresses on sciatic nerve on one or both sides of the spine. This causes pain and discomfort around lower back, buttocks or back of the legs.

TCM treatment at our clinic targets the very cause of the problem i.e. the inflamed disc by a combination of acupuncture, herbal remedies and a specialist massage. Our patients usually experience a noticeable improvement from the first treatment session and, more often than not, go on to achieve a full recovery within a couple of weeks, depending on the seriousness of the condition and their commitment to following the treatment plan. We should also mention that the longer the problem is left to fester, the more difficult it becomes to treat, so we would highly recommend leaving the balls to the playground, where they belong, and coming to see us as soon as you can.

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