

# Lumbar Derangement Syndrome



Congratulations, you have been diagnosed as having **Lumbar Derangement Syndrome**. What is that you may ask? Well there are many types of low back problems and this is one. It presents with some common and predictable pain sites and problems.

Twisting often causes it, especially if you were bent over at the time. Sometimes it will come on easier if you are bent over for a long time before twisting. On occasion it may come on just from lifting straight up when the load is too heavy for you. A weird movement you did or even coughing while you moved can cause it. Sometimes it may come on for no apparent reason. You did not deserve it.

The bottom line is, you now have a back problem that you can still affect in a good or bad way.

You have sprained the outer aspect of the disc, which can affect you from minimal pain to being in constant pain.

The best analogy for this problem is that you have a weakness in your tire wall (disc). Any increase in pressure will make it bulge more and decreased pressure will ease off the pain.

Your goal is to keep the pressure reduced until it heals. The response to the pain and the sprain is for the body to move into a protective position. This is not always the best position. You need to keep straight, for the more you bend and sit, the more you encourage the disc material to move backwards and out.

In general, your pain will change depending on the pressure that is on the disc. It will be worse in the morning on waking. This is a result of taking on more fluid in the disc while sleeping at night. You may be stiff in the morning when you get up and it may take a while to loosen up; walking around often helps. Sometimes it is even impossible to put your socks on until you have been up for a while.

Sitting is the worst, often getting worse the longer you sit. You may feel the urge to bend forward to take the pain away. This will work for a time but the pain will come on again after a while and you will have to bend further forward and so on. Upon standing, you may be really bent over. You must avoid this urge to bend while sitting and you must stay as straight as you can. You are encouraging the disc to move further out towards the back of the spine when you do this. You may even need back support.





Walking will in general ease the pain, if it is really bad, you will have a limit to the time you can stand and then must sit. This of course will increase your pain after a while and you will have to sit again.

Sometimes the pain will go into one leg and there may be numbness or pins and needles felt. This is a sign of the nerves being affected as well. As things get better these should get less or get closer to the spine.

When you do the exercises, they should not increase your leg pain or go further out into the leg. If they do, then you are either pushing the exercises too much or moving in the wrong direction. Check with your treating clinician.

Your clinician will show you ways to do things differently during the day to minimize the pressure on the disc. This means that the pain should decrease. The first thing you will notice is that there will be more ease with movement and as the movement increases, the pain will decrease. There are now more positions you can be in without aggravating the problem and this will allow the pain to abate.

The aim is to centralize the disc. First by getting you straight from left to right so you are not shifted to the side. This can be done lying on your stomach and also in standing.

After that you need to get upright; this can be done lying on your stomach and in standing also.

Treatment will vary depending on the pain level, and how severe your problem is. Between you and the clinician, you will be able to manage this type of back problem well.

Notes from Your Physical Therapist:

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**If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Above & Beyond Physical Therapy.**

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