


Patient's Guide to Back Pain Relief

& Decompression Therapy



Dr. Horn's
Proven Approach
For Ending Chronic
Back and Neck Pain
Without Drugs or Surgery.

Lordex Spine Center of Athens

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Thanks for asking for our Patient's Guide...

You will want to read this guide if you suffer from any of the following: sciatica, degenerative disc disease, spinal stenosis, arthritis, back and/or neck pain due to a bulged or herniated disc.

What sort of pain are we speaking about? The kind that interrupts nearly all aspects of your life...from trying to get cozy for a good night's rest, to getting showered and dressed in the morning, stooping over to put on your shoes, sitting in your car for any duration of time, getting down on the floor to romp with the kids, walking the length of the mall, enjoying a round of golf...

In other words, pain that appears to always be with you or always seems to lurk in the background waiting to flare up and ruin another activity you've always enjoyed doing.

So if you are experiencing aching, burning, sharp, shooting or numbing pain more times than not, and you'd like to be free of that pain once and for all, read on.

This Guide could be the key to leaving all your fears concerning doctor visits, surgery and even medications behind you.

Sincerely,
Dr. Tom Horn
The Lordex Spine Center
Athens, PA

If you suffer with lower back pain, you're not the only one!

In fact, statistics reveal that back pain is one of the most common complaints seen at primary care office visits. Millions of people like you are in continuous pain, not able to do the things they once enjoyed most.

Like you, they are looking for real solutions.

Solutions that do not require the lifelong use of unsafe and habit-forming pain medications, or worse yet, painful and dangerous surgery.

Unfortunately, many pain sufferers have not been able to find effective solutions.

And numerous people, sadly, will end up coping with chronic pain for the remainder of their lives.

This Patient's Guide will help you discover:

- The many causes, varieties and symptoms of lower back pain.
- How the numbness in your legs and buttocks could be caused by sciatica, a by-product of low back dysfunction, and how you can eliminate it.
- Why in most cases surgery, with its related risks, should be your last resort.
- How long term reliance on pain medication can be harmful and why it can set you up for a lifetime of chronic pain.

- Spinal Decompression – what it is, how it works, why it works, and why it is a real breakthrough in the treatment of lower back pain, even if you have had surgery in the past.

Low back pain is a common problem...

Suffering from low back pain? You are not alone. Let's view the following statistics:

- 80-90% of all adults will experience low back pain at some point in their life.
- Lower back pain is the leading cause of disability for people under 45 years of age.
- Lower back pain is the second leading cause of visits to doctors' offices.
- Lower back pain is the third leading reason for hospital admissions.
- Annual costs of back pain range from \$20-\$75 billion in the U.S. alone.
- Studies indicate that 15-20% of the population have lower back pain in any given year...approximately 32 million cases.

Most doctors believe the claim that 90% of all incidences of low back pain will take care of themselves within one month.

But eliminating back pain *without any treatment is one of the biggest myths.*

A study done in May of 1998 on back pain appeared in the British Medical Journal. They used a widespread sample of back pain patients' conditions. They followed their progress 12 months after their first medical consultation and found that only one out of four patients saw their pain resolved. That means three out of four continued to suffer.

We have seen many patients over the years who have tried multiple prescribed remedies. You also, have probably tried several prescribed remedies to help alleviate your chronic pain. These may include any of the following: bed rest, medication, acupuncture, chiropractic, physical therapy, injections or surgery.

Like so many others, you may be baffled and disappointed that you have not found a solution. You may have come to recognize that you may just

have to learn to live with the pain. (Even your family doctor may say those precise words to you.) After trying and failing with everything else, you are possibly considering surgery as a last resort to relieve your pain.

The Pain Will Resolve Itself Is a Myth!

Patients level of back pain after 12 months:

25% No pain and no disability

25% Continuing pain or disability

50% Pain AND disability

Which pain level are you?

Before you choose surgery, study these facts:

-There are more than a half-million surgical procedures on the back every year performed by surgeons in the U.S alone.

-Back surgery is performed in the United States at a rate 40% higher than in eleven other developed countries and at five times the rate performed in England and Scotland.

-Many back surgeries are unsuccessful. (And some studies indicate the success rate at less than 60 %.) Once you have back surgery, the chances of needing a second surgery are very high.

-Approximately 25,000 to 50,000 documented “failed back surgery syndrome” cases occur each year.

-A study published in the Medical Journal SPINE, followed 109 patients for 12 years after back surgery. They found that satisfactory results were found in only 64% of the patients, while 28% complained of significant back or leg pain, and 7.3% had a repeat operation.

-Another, larger study, also published in SPINE, followed the long-term results of 575 back surgery patients. According to the study, 70% still complained of back pain. Of those; 83% experienced constant, heavy pain, 45% residual sciatica, 47% received some form of disability, and 17% required a repeat surgery.

What Causes Back Pain?

A lot of times, back pain is the result of a structural problem and until the structure of the spine is looked at, the pain will not go away.

Our spines are made up of several bones called vertebrae. There is a fibrous structure between each vertebra which has a soft inner core and that is called the disc. There is a soft inner structure called the nucleus pulposus, and the outer portion of the disc is called the annulus fibrosis.

This structure creates space between the vertebrae so the delicate spinal nerves can pass through the openings (called foramen) to reach their targeted destination. It also provides flexibility and cushioning to the spine.

A cycle of pain will begin if the discs become damaged in any way.

How Do Discs Become Damaged?

Even though discs are very sturdy and resilient; they are very vulnerable to injury with repetitive activity and loading. For example when you lift the wrong way or sit in one position for extended periods of time, the fibers in the disc begin to weaken.

An example of this is a piece of wire. If you bend the wire one time, it doesn't break, but if you do it over and over again it just snaps in half.

The fibers of the outer portion, the annulus fibrosis acts in much the same way. As the stresses on the disc are repeated (such as repetitive lifting or even sitting in one position for extended periods of time) the fibers break down.

This produces small cracks and fissures in the discs creating a pathway for the softer inner nucleus to slowly leak out. This is the beginning of a disc bulge or herniation.

What Is A Herniated Or Bulging Disc?

The disc is made up of sturdy fibers called the annulus fibrosis. The interior has a soft, jelly-like matter called the nucleus. When your disc is damaged or torn, the jelly-like matter on the inside can leak out.

A herniated disc is when it leaks out entirely.

If the outer material is undamaged (and not torn) discs can bulge without herniating. An example would be stepping on a tube of toothpaste. The toothpaste tube does not pop but it bulges out to one side or the other without the outer cover tearing.

A major cause of back pain is when someone has a bulging disc or a herniated disc. The nerves that pass by as they come out of the spine (being very fragile) can be pinched. That can cause what we call “radiating pain”.

Radiating pain is tingling and numbness going down your leg or arm and possibly into your toes or fingers. It can also be referred to as sciatica in the leg, or cervical radiculopathy in the arm.

When there is pressure on the discs, the interior nucleus will migrate through the small cracks and fissures that have been created.

While the outer portion of the disc weakens, the pressure on the discs causes the interior nucleus to migrate through the little cracks and fissures that have been made.

This pressure changes with varied activities. Lifting incorrectly can dramatically increase the pressure in the interior of the disc. When the pressure in the disc increases, the force pushes the interior matter outward. And if there are little cracks or tears in the outer fibers of the disc, this material can virtually be “squeezed out”.

Many times people are astonished by the sudden onset of back pain and usually unable to remember what they did to injure themselves. The cause for this is that only the outer 1/3 of the disc is sensitive to pain.

So, you may not experience pain until you do an activity or make a movement that causes just enough increased pressure on the disc to force the disc material out to the pain sensitive areas of the disc. This will result in inflammation and pain.

This can send you to an emergency room or put you flat on your back. If the pressure is significant enough, the interior disc material can be forced all the way out (a herniated disc) and cause pressure on the fragile spinal nerves leading to a severe burning pain or numbness in your legs or arms.

If you have never experienced this before, it is unfortunate that it could be just the beginning.

Research shows that there is an 84% chance of suffering with back pain again after having one episode with back pain.

The spinal discs need a constant supply of fresh oxygen and nutrients pumped in and out to keep them healthy because they don't have a blood supply. When there is normal motion and muscular strength in the spine, and no damage to the discs, then everything is working fine.

What leads to chronic problems is when a disc gets damaged, then it doesn't have the ability to stay hydrated and it becomes dry and brittle.

It is not recommended for a person recovering from a severe back pain problem to return to normal daily activities too soon, just because they feel better. After the inflammation decreases, the exterior fibers of the disc are no longer irritated and it makes you think the problem is totally gone. If you make a wrong move, then the pain will come back and many times can be even worse.

At this point the discs are even more damaged than before. Then the pain starts to move to other parts of the body such as: the hip, groin area, legs, neck, shoulders or arms. Now, not only is your back involved, you also have sciatica or cervical radiculopathy (neck and arm/hand pain).

You have heard of Sciatica, do you know what it is?

It is the sensation of pain, tingling or numbness in the back, the buttocks, and/or the legs and it is produced by an irritation of the sciatic nerve.

The sciatic nerve consists of multiple nerves as they exit from the spinal cord and into the lower portion of the back. The sciatic nerve also extends through the buttocks and down the back of each leg to the foot and ankle. The most common causes of sciatica are herniated, bulging or degenerative discs, which cause pressure and irritation to the nerve.

Other causes may include small bony growths on the spine (bone spurs) and the compression or pinching of the nerve by the muscles of the buttocks or leg. And in some cases, sciatica may be caused by tumors, pregnancy and spinal stenosis.

Common diseases and conditions of the spine that can cause chronic back pain:

Bulging Disc

Discs act like shock absorbers to the vertebrae, taking a lot of stress. Any traumatic pressure such as from a fall, work injury or pregnancy can cause a disc to bulge which will tear the connective tissue holding it in place, causing inflammation and nerve pressure.

Degenerated Disc

Disc degeneration is characterized by tears around the outer surface of the disc. It is caused by the drying out of the disc. Age, poor diet, smoking and injury can cause discs to dry, crack and tear, putting pressure on the surrounding nerves.

Herniated disc

When the hard, fibrous material of the disc wall ruptures due to weakening of the exterior fibers or traumatic pressure, the cushioning gel inside the disc or nucleus pulposus oozes out. When this gel protrudes into a nearby

nerve channel, it can cause painful pressure on the spinal cord or nerve roots.

Disc Degeneration with Osteophyte (spur) Formation

Disc degeneration also brings the vertebrae closer together which results in a gradual wearing of the bone. From this wear and tear, arthritic spurs, or osteophytes, may form and press on nerve roots.

Facet Syndrome

Facets are wing-shaped protrusions along each vertebrae that align with the facets on the vertebrae just above and just below. At the point where the two facets meet are small cartilage type surfaces that work as a cushioning tissue. These facets are not designed to bear weight as the vertebrae and discs are.

Therefore, if these discs thin, rupture or bulge and thereby lose height, the facets are brought close together and start to bear a portion of the body's weight causing inflammation of the surrounding tissue and nerves as well as damaging the cartilage surfaces and irritating the pain sensitive nerves inside the joint.

Are You Aware What The Drug Companies Don't Tell Us About The Long Term Use Of Pain Medications?

There are both, Doctors and patients who treat back pain with certain medications. Both over-the-counter "pain killers" and prescription medications may bring some immediate, temporary relief but you will find you have to continue to take more and more because the pain returns as soon as the pills wear off.

The Drug Companies Also Don't Tell You That The Drugs Do Not "Cure" The Cause For The Back Pain. They Just Mask The Symptoms.

Do you know how drugs work? They disable your brain's ability to feel the sensation of pain coming from your back. The pain is still there – however, you don't feel it. Pain is the body's way of trying to send you a message, "slow down" or "stop what you are doing!" And since you can't feel the pain

now, your body has no way of protecting you from hurting yourself even more.

Besides increasing the risk of making your pain worse, all drugs have dangerous side effects. Be aware that they can do damage to your stomach, kidneys and liver. For example, a cortisone shot in your back may deaden your nerves for short time, but the pain returns when the shot wears off. You are still “masking symptoms.”

Doctors and Patients Turn To Physical Therapy After Finding Out Drugs Are Not Effective

If there is a disc injury, it has to be taken care of before or during a rehabilitation program, the rehabilitation program has to be the correct kind of program and muscle-specific.

Going To A Surgeon

Primary care doctors will often refer their patients to surgeons. You may hear that the surgeon can't make any promises to cure you and you may have to learn to live with some pain for the rest of your life.

Some studies show a success rate of only 47-50% for back surgery. It can be one of the most ineffective types of surgery because the nerves that surround the spine are very sensitive and any amount of nerve damage or scar tissue can lead to chronic or severe problems leaving you with more pain down the road.

Most surgeries will give only temporary relief or none at all. You will need a lengthy recovery period not being able to work, heavy bed rest and decreased movement.

In addition, the screws, scarring, brackets, bone fusions that come with surgery are a real life situation most are not ready to accept.

It's sad to say, but surgery has too often become a hazardous choice for what is generally a problem that can be treated with advanced, non-surgical decompression technology.

How We Can Now Treat Back Pain Without Reliance On Drugs Or Surgery

Over a decade ago, Dr. Alan Dyer (credited with the invention of the heart defibrillator), and then Prime Minister of Health of Ontario, Canada, was faced with a crisis. Back pain treatment costs were rising astronomically and there was no end in sight.

In a quest to find an alternative to costly and often unsuccessful surgical procedures, Dr. Dyer began exhaustive research to see if a non-invasive mechanism could be developed to decompress discs in order to “fix” the problem associated with many types of crippling back pain.

Working with a renowned neuro-surgeon and a team of engineers, they combined proven medical principles with the latest technological developments. The result: something they called: a “vertebral axial decompression” system. After developing and testing the computer-controlled equipment and evaluating video fluoroscopic spinal images to measure actual changes in disc pressure, the science of spinal decompression was born.

This technological leap has been shown to be up to 88.8% effective in relieving back pain

What makes decompression work? Through the application of the patented decompression mechanism, the effects of disc compression and gravity are removed. That means all the pressure is taken off your spine and discs.

A negative pressure is created inside the disc. This negative pressure actually draws the herniated material back into the disc and improves disc nutrition--allowing the disc to re-hydrate, regenerate and heal. By naturally drawing the herniated material back into the disc, pressure on the nerves is relieved--and so is the excruciating pain so many back pain patients experience.

Spinal decompression takes away the true cause of your pain symptoms instead of masking it with drugs or cutting the herniation out with surgery.

The Process Of Spinal Decompression Has Been Proven To Relieve Pain By:

- Enlarging the space between the discs
- Reducing herniations
- Strengthening outer ligaments to help move herniated material back into place
- Reversing the high intra-discal pressures through the application of negative pressure

In simple English, the Lordex Spinal Decompression System relieves pain fast by virtually “repairing” damaged discs.

In addition, the Lordex Spinal Decompression therapy is gentle, safe and fast...

The Lordex Spinal Decompression System has documented success treating:

- ⇒ Back pain
- ⇒ Neck Pain
- ⇒ Arm Pain
- ⇒ Sciatica
- ⇒ Herniated and/or bulging discs (single or multiple)
- ⇒ Degenerative disc disease
- ⇒ A relapse or failure following surgery
- ⇒ Facet syndrome
- ⇒ Stenosis

A very important note: Here at The Lordex Spine Center, Spinal Decompression has been successful with even the most severe cases including failed surgery.

How Does It Feel To Have Spinal Decompression Done?

After being fitted in an adjustable harness system, the Lordex Decompression System slowly brings your spine into tension. The comfortable harness helps stabilize both your hips and pelvis.

The decompression system's advanced computer controls automatically adjust and monitor the proper angle of distraction (the amount of tension that is gently applied), allowing us to target the specific discs that are causing your pain and symptoms.

This distractive force utilizes a logarithmic curve to avoid the normal proprioceptor response (muscle spasms). In addition, the split table design decreases friction and allows gentle separation of the vertebra, *minimizing the effect of gravity*.

Basically, you relax and the Lordex Decompression System computer creates a decompressive effect on your back that helps herniated material return to its normal position and stops the pain.

Our patients describe the treatment as a gentle, intermittent pulling of your back. And it can be so relaxing, that many patients actually fall asleep during treatment.

How Does Decompression Differ From Other Traction Devices?

Traction, which has been around for a long period of time, has not produced the best results. The problem with traction is that it pulls the spine and the muscles at the same time which often triggers painful muscle spasms (proprioceptor response.)

The Lordex Decompression System, on the other hand, applies specific logarithmic forces to decrease intra-discal pressure and enhance fluid exchange within the disc. This expands the space between the bones and restores nutrients and blood flow to the disc which causes healing.

A big difference between spinal decompression and the old traction method is that spinal decompression returns the herniated matter back into the

disc, but traction doesn't. This has been confirmed on MRI studies comparing the two.

Patients also say the Lordex Spinal Decompression treatments are extremely comfortable... even relaxing... while traction can be very uncomfortable.

How Long Are The Treatments?

Each treatment lasts approximately 60 minutes. This will depend on your case and is determined by an evaluation on an individual basis.

How Many Treatments Do I Need?

Most patients have 20 to 25 treatment sessions. These will take about 6 to 8 weeks to complete.

Typically patients see relief after just a few treatments. Some patients report immediate relief after just one treatment, while others take 2-3 weeks. Each case is unique.

Studies show that patients remain free of pain long after they finish the treatment program. So, we are happy to say this is not something you will have to do for the rest of your life. The decompression process really does heal the disc.

While undergoing decompression therapy at the Lordex Spine Center, an aggressive strengthening and flexibility program is initiated to restore overall stability to the spine.

But to be effective, the goal of any rehabilitation plan must be to correct muscle weakness and re-educate the neuromuscular system properly. If a decompression program doesn't effectively target the strength and stability of the spine after addressing the disc, long term benefits may not be recognized for reasons we talked about earlier.

Low back rehabilitation has to be specific to the lumbar extensors. So general exercise and conditioning plans cannot handle a patient's specific "weak area" effectively.

Is Decompression Therapy Covered By My Insurance? If Not, How Much Does It Cost?

Our Insurance personnel will verify your Out of Network Insurance Benefits to determine if there is any coverage under your specific policy.

If you are accepted for care, fees will be discussed with you individually and our payment plans will be explained to you. Most of our patients find our fee arrangements fit within their budgets or savings.

So whatever type of insurance coverage you have, please don't let our program's cost stand in the way of helping to eliminate your pain.

Next step: Find out if our Decompression Therapy and Strength Restoration Therapy can help you today!

I suspect if you have gotten this far in our guide that you have been experiencing your pain for a long time. Most likely it never really goes away and often times it gets worse.

Your back pain is not the problem, just the symptom of it. We encourage you to take the next "action" step and find out if decompression therapy is what you have been looking for.

Here's how to find out: Call our office at (570) 882-9009 and ask for our Free Decompression Assessment questionnaire (which will be sent to you by mail or fax).

The assessment will help you find out if decompression would be the appropriate choice of treatment for you. You will receive a **complimentary consultation** in which we will review your case and history in detail. We will also address any questions you may have involving the treatment.

You've got nothing to lose but your pain.

So, if you're experiencing chronic pain in your back, leg, neck, shoulder or arm, don't put this off any longer. Find out now, if you're a candidate for our non-surgical breakthrough treatment ...fill out our free assessment, it's fast and easy.