PromoteHealth
Physiotherapy & Performance

A confident, informed return to movement and sport

Sciatica: understanding your recovery

Sciatica is leg pain caused by irritation of a nerve in the lower back. It may include tingling, numbness or weakness, usually on one side. Recovery often takes weeks to months.

YOUR RECOVERY ROADMAP

01	START HERE **Get assessed**	A clinician can check your symptoms, leg strength and sensation. This helps confirm the cause and tailor your care, especially with new or ongoing symptoms.
02	MANAGE A FLARE-UP **Pace your activity**	Break tasks into manageable amounts and change position regularly. Keep gently active, with short rests when needed, rather than prolonged sitting or bed rest.
03	BUILD CONFIDENCE **Move with support**	Choose exercises with your physiotherapist that suit your symptoms and ability. Adjust the amount as needed; seek advice if leg symptoms are worsening.
04	BUILD CAPACITY **Return gradually**	Build up walking, work and usual activities in realistic steps. You do not have to be completely symptom-free to return to work; temporary adjustments may help.

DO I NEED A SCAN?

Scans are not routinely needed. A specialist may arrange one if it would change treatment. Persistent, disabling symptoms may need a specialist review.

WHAT ABOUT PAIN RELIEF?

Ask a pharmacist or GP about options. Benefits of anti-inflammatories for sciatica are uncertain and they can cause harm. Review prescribed medicines before changing or stopping them.

WHEN TO GET MEDICAL HELP

Go to A&E or call 999 now: sciatica on both sides; severe or worsening weakness or numbness in both legs; new numbness around the genitals or anus; difficulty starting or controlling urine; or loss of bowel awareness or control. New sexual-function changes also need emergency assessment. Do not drive yourself.

Urgent GP / NHS 111: new or increasing leg weakness, a foot that starts to drag, or feeling feverish or unwell with back or leg pain.

Arrange a GP review: pain that is worsening, limiting normal activities, or not improving after a few weeks. Mention unexplained weight loss, night pain or a history of cancer.

INFORMED BY: NICE NG59 • NHS: Sciatica • NHS inform: Sciatica

Disclaimer: For general information only; not a replacement for professional medical advice or an individual rehabilitation plan.

GET IN TOUCH

www.promotehealth.co.uk

07446 836243 | info@promotehealth.co.uk

Physiotherapy in Abingdon | Online support available