

SACROILIAC SYNDROME

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As a physician specializing in spinal disorders, I frequently am exposed to individuals experiencing back pain. One of the most common areas of spinal injury and resulting back pain is the sacroiliac joint(s) of the pelvis. This sacroiliac joint is often to blame in back pain.

Sacroiliac pain will be felt at or below the waistline, on one or both sides of the back. Pain is not uncommonly noticed in the buttock and into the leg on the affected side. Locking, catching, or a pressure is often described by the injured patient. Prolonged periods of standing in place, sitting or riding in a car may intensify the problem.

The sacroiliac joint is formed by the union of the sacrum and ilium bones. The joint contains cartilage, a synovial lining, a joint capsule and is reinforced by many strong ligaments. The sacroiliac moves when the lower spine and hips move. Movement occurs as one changes from a sitting to a standing posture when bending forward or backwards at the waist, and with walking and running.

Injury to the sacroiliac joint, causing sacroiliac syndrome, can occur in a number of ways due to heavy lifting with the back bent or twisted, by blows to the back or from falls onto the back. These accidents can sprain the sacroiliac ligaments, strain muscle in the area of the joint, cause displacement or “subluxation” of the sacrum or ilium and/or create a locking or “fixation” of the sacroiliac joint. Subluxation and fixation are common causes of sacroiliac dysfunction, which require prompt professional care.

Evaluation of these conditions can accurately be performed only by a licensed chiropractic doctor. Specific corrective “adjustments,” made by the chiropractor, can relieve the sacroiliac dysfunction allowing for the return of normal joint biomechanics, muscle function and tissue healing, thereby returning to maximum pain-free performance.

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