

Referred (Radicular) Pain

What Does Radiculopathy Mean?

Radiculopathy is the word used to describe the symptoms that occur as a result of the irritation of a nerve most likely near the nerve root. There are many symptoms you can have including pain, pins and needles, numbness and weakness. These symptoms will be felt somewhere else in your body along the route of the nerve, which is why it is also known as referred pain.

For example, you could be getting pain and tingling in your foot as a result of irritation of the nerves at the base of your back.

Why Do I Have Radiculopathy (Referred) Symptoms?

There are many different causes of nerve irritation. Some of these include:

- Age related changes which increases a risk of nerve irritation. For example conditions such as spinal stenosis or spondylolisthesis.
- Injury to your back- injuries can result in inflammation which can cause irritation to the nearby nerves.
- Repetitive movement patterns – moving again and again into certain positions can irritate your nerves.
- Disc related changes, such as a herniated disc can cause irritation to the nearby nerves.

How Can I Help Myself?

Rehabilitation can help you to understand your pain, improve your quality of movement and improve strength which will all help to reduce your pain. Use pain relief as needed. If you cannot manage your pain with over the counter pain relief, contact your local pharmacist or GP for further advice. [?link here to 'managing pain' section.](#)

What if My Pain Does not Get Better?

Back and radicular pain will typically take 4-6 months to show a significant improvement. Your therapist may refer you to an Advanced Practitioner if your pain is not improving despite following the appropriate advice and rehabilitation. At this stage, they will be able to discuss further options that may be helpful in your recovery.