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# Understanding Herniated Discs

Health & Wellness Newsletter

Are you struggling with severe lower back pain? Did you injure your back when bending or twisting? You could be suffering from a herniated disc.

A herniated disc is one of the most painful back injuries that you can experience, and it is far more common than you may be initially aware of. A herniated disc is commonly associated with severe or sharp pain starting in the lower back (or neck) radiating down the leg (or arm). It can be so intense that people struggle to do everyday activities.

Call Therapy West Physical Therapy & Sports Medicine today to make an appointment. With guidance from our physical therapists, you can find solutions to your pain and get back to living the life you enjoy!

## What Is A Herniated Disc?

Your spine comprises a series of interlocking bones, called vertebrae, with a specialized tissue in between each vertebra called the intervertebral disc (aka disc). The structure of your spine is what allows you to move freely forward and back, rotationally and from side to side.

A herniated disc is a condition in which the nucleus pulposus (located within the center of the disc) herniates. This herniation causes pain and maybe even more pain if the herniated disc begins to press on the adjacent spinal nerves, causing pain and inflammation.

## Causes Of Disc Herniation

The most common cause of disc herniation is the degenerative process. As we age, the disc is less hydrated, and it weakens. This process makes the disc more susceptible to herniation.

The second most common cause of disc herniation is trauma. The most common injuries are bending, twisting, and lifting events. It is also possible to herniate from traumas related to sports injuries or car accidents. In these cases, the herniation occurs as a result of overloading of pressure on the disc.

*Risk factors that can increase your risk of a herniated disk include:*

- **Smoking.** It's thought that smoking lessens the oxygen supply to the disk, causing it to break down more quickly.
- **Weight.** Excess body weight causes extra stress on the disks in your lower back.
- **Occupation.** People with physically demanding jobs that require repetitive lifting, bending, and twisting also can increase your risk of a herniated disk.
- **Sedentary lifestyles.** Prolonged sitting postures, whether in an office or vehicle, have a greater risk of back problems.
- **Genetics.** Some people inherit a predisposition to developing a herniated disk.



# New Location!

You may have noticed some construction on west Main Street in Salina. We are SO excited to add a location in Salina to better serve our patients. We are anticipating to be open the beginning of 2024. **Stay tuned for updates.**

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## Treatment For Herniated Discs

If you suspect that you may have a herniated disc, contact a physical therapist right away. Attempting to engage in therapy at home could lead to further injury. It is best to have an experienced therapist assess your injury before attempting any treatment options.

Your physical therapist will perform a thorough physical examination and provide you with solutions that work based on the findings. *A combination of passive and active techniques is typically employed, including:*

### Education

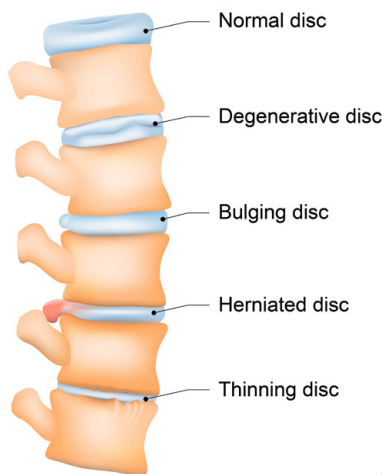
Understanding the source of your pain and managing it can help you be proactive and find a solution.

### Advice To Stay Active

It is crucial to stay active. Your physical therapist can help you identify modifications to painful tasks and help you be safe and active.

### Therapeutic interventions

A physical therapist will tailor your exercises, monitor you, and progress you based on your individual needs.



## Supervised exercise therapy includes:

- Range of motion exercises
- Proper stretches exercises
- Strength exercises
- Manual therapy techniques for pain relief and improved mobility
- Electrical stimulation for pain relief

## Contact Our Clinic Today

Physical therapy aims to restore range of motion and improve strength while reducing the general experience of pain. It provides targeted exercises that support the spinal joints with precise movements that help reinforce strength and range of motion.

Call Therapy West Physical Therapy & Sports Medicine today for a comprehensive assessment and learn what steps you can take to alleviate your pain and prevent further episodes.

Sources:  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK441822/>  
<https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/6/12/e012938>  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5685963/>  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4718239/>  
<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-021-83471-y>

Stop letting pain get in the way. Give us a call or visit [www.TherapyWestPT.com](http://www.TherapyWestPT.com) today!

# How EMG Testing Can Help Identify a Herniated Disc

When you're in pain, you want relief fast. But until you know the source of your pain, you'll never be able to resolve it entirely. This is especially true with back pain, which can have any number of potential causes.

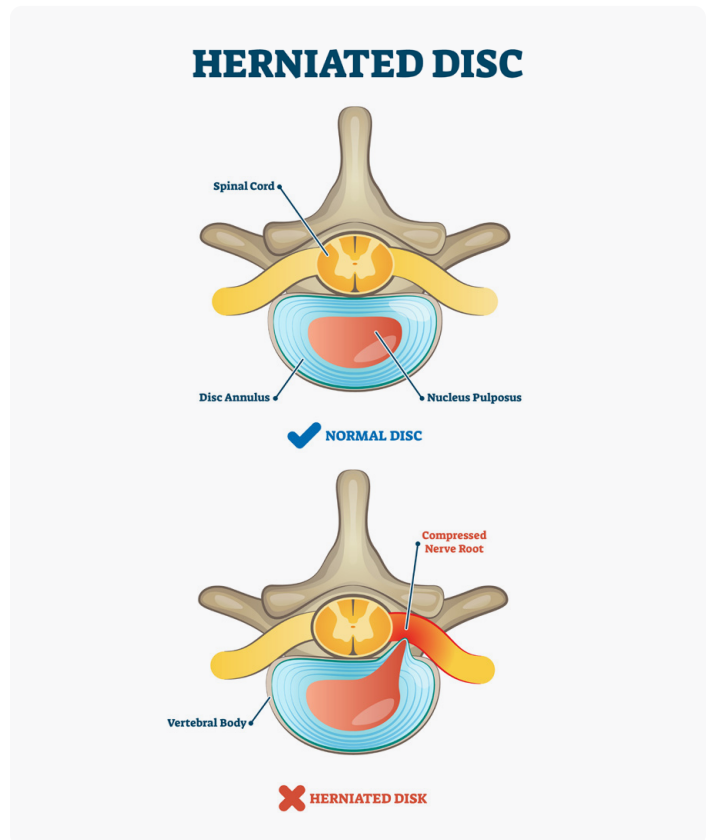
Herniated discs are one common cause of lower back pain. While certain symptoms, such as radiating pain or muscle weakness, can indicate a herniated disc, diagnostic tools such as EMG testing will help you know for sure.

An EMG (electromyography) is a simple procedure that measures the electrical activity of your muscles. It's often performed alongside an NCV (nerve conduction study), which measures the speed of electrical activity along your nerves. Together, these two studies can confirm that your sharp, shooting pain is, in fact, courtesy of a herniated disc.

Therapy West Physical Therapy & Sports Medicine is one of the few practices that provide EMG testing services in the state. We offer fast turnaround times on all tests, so your diagnosing physician can provide you with a quicker diagnosis—and you can get the targeted relief you need!

## Schedule Your EMG Test Today!

With fast, simple scheduling and even faster turnarounds, you'll be feeling better in no time. To get started, call us to schedule your testing appointment today!



Sources:  
<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/electromyography-emg-and-nerve-conduction-studies/>

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