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# Relief from Back Pain and Sciatica

*Health & Wellness Newsletter*

**Have you been struggling with persistent back pain and been told it's because you have sciatica? Does your pain travel down your leg?** It can be challenging to understand when it seems like even the medical community disagrees with what to call your condition. Fortunately, at Therapy West Physical Therapy, we can clear it up for you and set you on the right path for relief!

As many as 80% of adults in the United States struggle with back pain at some point in their lives. Back pain can start for a variety of reasons but some of the more common causes are being in a car accident, a sports injury, poor posture, or lifting something heavy.

Unfortunately, up to 90% of low back pain diagnoses are non-specific. This means that not only do people suffer from back pain, but the exact cause may be difficult to identify. Confusion about the source of pain is complicated enough, but some of the confusion is in the diagnosis terminology.

To clarify what you need to do to alleviate your pain, your physical therapist can categorize your pain, so you understand what is happening and, more importantly, what to do about it!

**Call Therapy West Physical Therapy today and schedule an appointment with one of our spine experts to get the answers you need to get back to the life you want to live!**

## Don't Let Your 2023 Insurance Benefits Go To Waste!

**Take charge of your health today and make the most of your insurance benefits!** If you've already met your deductible this year or have funds left in your Health Savings Account, you can take advantage of this remarkable opportunity at Therapy West Physical Therapy. Don't let these valuable benefits go unused!



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

# Staff Spotlight

*Breanna Christensen (PTA)*



**Breanna Christensen (aka Bre)** grew up in Evanston, Wyoming where she loved playing sports, hunting, and spending time with her 5 sisters.

She attended Utah State University and Provo College where she earned her degree as a Physical Therapist Assistant in 2017. She joined the Therapy West team in 2020 where she has worked in the outpatient clinic, the Gunnison hospital, and home health.

She has 3 energetic boys who keep her and her husband very busy. Together they love camping, side by side rides, and playing games. They love calling Gunnison home.

One crazy fact about Bre is when she was three years old she was attacked by a donkey. She had to be life flighted and received 150 stitches and plastic surgery on her arms.

[Click Here](#) to learn more about our entire team of specialists!



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## How Physical Therapy Can Help You Find Relief

If you are experiencing back pain or sciatica and haven't talked to a physical therapist about your concerns, then now is the time to take action. Working with a physical therapist can help you understand what you are dealing with and, most importantly, how to resolve it once and for all!

Whether you come to physical therapy with lower back pain or sciatica, your physical therapist will perform a thorough physical examination and provide you with solutions that work based on the finding.

### Education

Understanding what you are experiencing and how to manage it can help you be proactive and find a solution. Understanding what is going on, and more importantly, what you can do about it, is one of the most effective solutions. It may seem insignificant, but it turns out to be one of the most important steps towards a solution.

### Manual therapy

Physical therapists often use manual therapy for their patients with sciatica. Manual therapies include a variety

of techniques that move one or more joints within normal ranges of motion to improve spinal joint motion or function. It can also include soft tissue techniques that help to alleviate pain and allow for more mobility and improved function.

### Exercise therapy

Supervised exercises are vital to a successful outcome. A physical therapist will tailor your exercises, monitor you, and progress you based on your individual needs. Supervised exercise therapy includes directional exercises, proper postural exercises, nerve mobilization, or strength exercises.

Working with a physical therapist is, hands down, the best thing you can do when you are looking to overcome back pain or sciatica. A physical therapist can identify the cause of the back pain/sciatica and present you with helpful strategies to reduce your pain, strengthen your back and improve your function.

### Call Our Clinic Today

If you're experiencing back pain or sciatica, don't wait. Call Therapy West Physical Therapy today and schedule your first appointment to have your condition assessed and get the guidance you need to get back to life!

Sources: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK507908/>, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1836955320300229?via%3Dihub>

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# How EMG/NCV Testing Can Help Find the Source of Your Pain

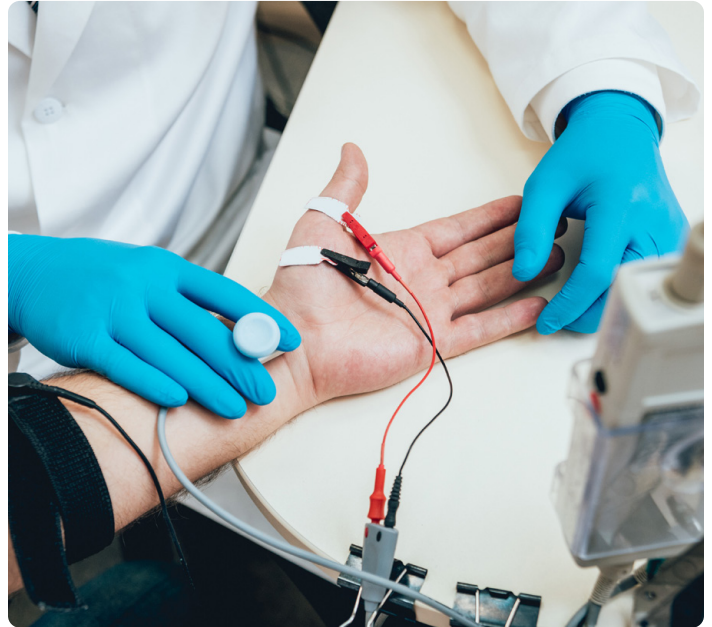
Whether you're struggling with sciatica or lower back pain, diagnostic testing at Therapy West Physical Therapy can help our therapists learn more about your symptoms and condition. We utilize EMG (electromyography) and NCV (nerve conduction velocity) tests to help us pinpoint the root of your pain.

**EMG testing** evaluates your muscle health and function by determining whether or not your muscles are responding to nerve signals the way they should.

During the test, one of our diagnostic specialists will place a needle electrode into the affected muscle. We'll then send a small electric current into the muscle while the machine responds to your muscle's activity. We'll perform the test while the muscle is both relaxed and contracted.

**NCV testing** measures how quickly electrical signals move through your body's nerves. It can help diagnose sciatica and other nerve disorders.

During an NCV test, we attach two surface electrodes to your skin rather than inserting them into the muscle. Our specialist will send a small electrical pulse between the electrodes to measure how quickly electrical activity runs along your nerves.



Together, these two tests can help determine whether your pain stems from a nerve disorder, a muscle disorder, an injury such as a herniated disc, or another cause altogether.

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

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