

## LETTERS

Dear *TalkBack*,

I am presently researching Piriformis Syndrome and have found very little acknowledgement of the condition and its devastating effects.

The winter 2016/17 edition of *TalkBack* revealed updated guidance on back pain from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence which has now been extended to include sciatica. I would be interested to discover whether there are implications for Piriformis Syndrome, since it causes terrible pain as it compromises both the Gluteal Nerves and the Sciatic nerves as they emerge from the Sciatic Notch within the buttock area. I would also

be interested to discover what readers know about myofascial trigger points which cause such havoc in the body, but do not seem to be recognised by many practitioners.

Piriformis Syndrome seems to be under-researched in the UK among the professionals and within the NHS, and only a few practitioners seem to be trying to deal with it.

**Mrs Janice Newcombe  
Essex**

Dear Mrs Newcombe,  
We are happy to circulate your request for information to BackCare-affiliated

practitioners and other *TalkBack* readers. In the meantime, there are a number of treatments available for Piriformis Syndrome, some of which can be used together. These include the use of ice packs and ice massage; heat therapy alternated with cold therapy; anti-inflammatory medication; stretches and exercise; injections; and deep massage.

*TalkBack* readers with knowledge of the condition are invited to share their experiences. Please write to [richard.sutton@backcare.org.uk](mailto:richard.sutton@backcare.org.uk).

**Norma Barry  
Chief executive  
BackCare**

## FEEDBACK DIGEST

*TalkBack* welcomes readers' stories on managing your back and neck problems and the different types of equipment, therapies, techniques and exercise programmes that have worked successfully for you.

### Muscular relaxation through rhythmic movement

"My last slipped disc was more than 10 years ago. This was because of my deskbound job. It's happened to me twice now. As a result, despite being reasonably flexible from practising yoga for many years, I was still very stiff. This was particularly bad after strenuous exercise. I would be painfully stiff for days, even weeks after this. Nothing seemed to help. I felt old before my time. I was late 30s early 40s at that time.

"About two years ago, I was lent the Flexicore Passive Exerciser. It works by encouraging total deep muscular relaxation by its rhythmic movement of your legs, which travels up your torso. I used it regularly for about a month then found I didn't need to use it as often. The semi-permanent stiffness had gone! I still use it if I feel I may have overdone it or after a very long walk. I have never felt that blocked up stiffness since using my exerciser, 15 minutes a day.

"I use the set programmes as they comfortably wind-up the motion then take you down again automatically. If I use it during the day I use the second programme, which is more energising. In the evening, I use the first one because that has a long wind-down period so I don't feel raring to go when I should be preparing for sleep.

"This can't prevent back problems and it does look like I have more disc problems brewing because I am still chained to a desk 9-5. However, using the exerciser regularly again is definitely helping me. The pains down my legs have all but gone. I get the odd twinge only –



The Flexicore Passive Exerciser: by creating a sideways oscillating motion through the spine, the flow of synovial fluid between the discs can be encouraged, helping to reduce inflammation and ease pain, as well as improving range of motion

usually at work after not moving enough. So I feel it is slowing down the deterioration and I hope, combined with careful exercise, may help resolve the problem without it developing into a full prolapse.

Moreover, I find I sleep better for using this machine.

**Linda Clarkson  
Gloucestershire**