Chichester PHYSIO LTD

7 EXPERT TIPS FOR MANAGING SCIATICA EFFECTIVELY



WRITTEN BY:

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OWNER & PRACTITIONER:

CHICHESTER PHYSIO

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ABOUT LINDY GRIFFITHS OF CHICHESTER PHYSIO

Lindy Griffiths is the the founder of Chichester Physio, specialising in the treatment of a wide range of musculoskeletal conditions. She provides expert care for individuals of all ages, from athletes to those suffering from chronic pain or injury. Lindy focuses on helping patients with back and neck pain, sports injuries, joint issues and post-surgical rehabilitation. She works closely with individuals dealing with mobility limitations, providing tailored physiotherapy plans that promote long-term recovery and enhanced quality of life. Lindy is dedicated to ensuring her patients regain full movement, strength, and confidence, enabling them to return to their everyday activities and improve their overall well-being. With a compassionate, hands-on approach, she uses evidence-based techniques to assess and treat each patient, ensuring the most effective care. Lindy is passionate about educating her patients on how to prevent future injuries, improve posture, and maintain an active, healthy lifestyle. Through her expertise and personalised approach, she empowers individuals to take control of their recovery and continue living life to the fullest.

INTRODUCTION

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Living with sciatica can make everyday activities such as sitting, walking, driving or sleeping uncomfortable. The good news is that there are practical steps you can take to manage symptoms and help yourself move with greater confidence.

In this guide, I share seven useful approaches: making sitting more comfortable, gentle stretches, improving core and gluteal strength, using heat or ice, adapting daily movements, nerve-gliding exercises and seeking personalised advice.

These tips can be a helpful starting point, but sciatica has different causes. When symptoms persist, the right assessment matters. At Chichester Physio, we combine hands-on physiotherapy and rehabilitation with specialist treatments, including **IDD Therapy spinal decompression** for suitable patients.

My aim is to help you understand your options and take a positive next step towards being active again.

Let's get started...

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1. Avoid Prolonged Sitting

Sitting—especially on soft sofas or in slouched positions—can increase pressure on the sciatic nerve, worsening your symptoms.

Tip:

- Set a timer to stand and stretch every 30–45 minutes.
- Use a chair with proper lumbar support and keep your feet flat on the floor.
- Avoid crossing your legs and keep your hips level.

Even small changes to your sitting routine can make a big difference in your comfort throughout the day.



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2. Stretch Your Piriformis Muscle

The piriformis muscle, located deep in the buttocks, often tightens and compresses the sciatic nerve. Gentle stretching can relieve pressure and reduce pain.

Tip:

- Lie on your back, cross one ankle over the opposite knee, and gently pull the lower leg toward your chest.
- Hold for 20–30 seconds and repeat on both sides.
- Perform this stretch 2–3 times daily.
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This stretch helps open up the hips and release tension in the deep gluteal muscles that can irritate the sciatic nerve.



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3. Strengthen Your Core & Glutes

A weak core or underactive glutes can place extra stress on the spine and pelvis, leading to poor movement patterns and sciatica flare-ups.

Tip:

- Start with gentle exercises like bridges, bird dogs, and pelvic tilts.
- Focus on slow, controlled movements and proper form.
- Gradually build intensity with the guidance of a therapist.

Strong core and glute muscles provide stability and reduce the strain on your lower back and sciatic nerve.



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4. Use Heat & Ice Strategically

Cold therapy can reduce inflammation, while heat can ease muscle tension. The key is knowing when to use each.

Tip:

- Use ice during acute flare-ups (first 48–72 hours) for 15–20 minutes, a few times a day.
- Use heat after that to relax tight muscles.
- Always place a towel between your skin and the ice/heat pack.

Alternating between hot and cold therapy can also help manage pain and promote healing.



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5. Watch Your Body Mechanics

Daily movements like bending, lifting, or twisting incorrectly can worsen sciatica symptoms or even trigger a flare-up.

Tip:

- Bend at the hips and knees—not your waist—when picking something up.
- Keep objects close to your body when lifting.
- Avoid twisting motions; pivot with your feet instead.

Being mindful of how you move throughout the day can prevent unnecessary stress on your spine and nerves.



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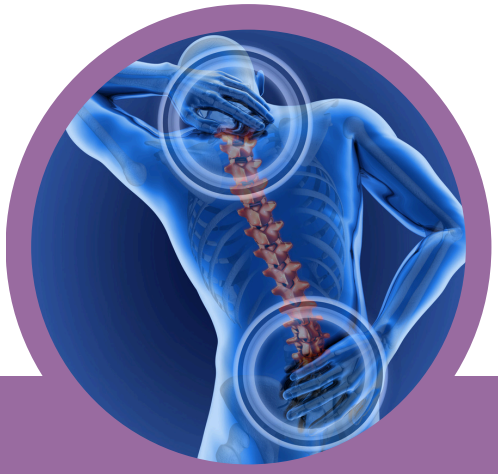
6. Try Nerve Gliding Exercises

Nerve gliding (or flossing) helps the sciatic nerve move more freely through the tissues it passes, reducing irritation and discomfort.

Tip:

- Lie on your back, bring one knee toward your chest, and gently straighten and bend the knee while keeping your foot flexed.
- Move slowly and stop if it increases your pain.
- Repeat for 10 reps on each side, once or twice a day.

These exercises are gentle and can improve nerve mobility when performed correctly under guidance.



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7. Get a Personalised Treatment Plan

No two cases of sciatica are identical. A physiotherapist can assess your symptoms, movement and medical history to identify the likely source of irritation and plan your recovery.

Your treatment plan may include:

- Hands-on physiotherapy to help you move more comfortably.
- Targeted strengthening, mobility work and advice about daily activities.
- Specialist **IDD Therapy spinal decompression**, when your assessment and MRI indicate that it is suitable.

Combining the right treatment with progressive rehabilitation can help you manage symptoms and return to the activities that matter to you.



WHAT TO DO NEXT

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If sciatica is limiting your life, there is no need to rely on guesswork. The most useful first step is to find out what is causing your symptoms and which treatment is right for you.

At **Chichester Physio**, our experienced physiotherapy team provides thorough assessment, hands-on treatment and personalised rehabilitation. We help patients build confidence in movement, improve strength and work towards a return to normal activity.

Specialist IDD Therapy for Sciatica

We also offer **IDD Therapy (Intervertebral Differential Dynamics)**, a specialist, non-surgical spinal decompression treatment. It uses computer-controlled, precisely directed decompression to target a particular level of the spine.

For patients with persistent sciatica associated with suitable disc problems, IDD Therapy can be an important treatment option. It is delivered as a structured course, alongside rehabilitation to help restore strength and function.

Our clinical team assesses whether IDD Therapy is appropriate for your particular condition. **An MRI scan is required before IDD treatment can begin**, so we can review the spinal structures involved and screen for conditions that would make decompression unsuitable.

Whether you need conventional hands-on physiotherapy, targeted rehabilitation or specialist IDD Therapy, we'll explain the options and recommend a plan tailored to you.

Call 01243 783040 to discuss the next step.

CONCLUSION

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We hope these seven practical tips have helped you understand how to manage sciatica more confidently. Small changes to activity, movement and exercise can be valuable — especially when they form part of a plan designed around your symptoms.

At Chichester Physio, we offer more than a standard exercise sheet. Our team provides hands-on physiotherapy, personalised rehabilitation and **specialist IDD Therapy spinal decompression** for suitable patients with persistent, disc-related sciatica.

With the right assessment, we can help identify the most appropriate route forward. If IDD Therapy may be suitable, we'll explain the process and the MRI requirements before you decide.

Your Free Discovery Visit

Book a **free Discovery Visit with one of our physiotherapy team** to discuss your sciatica, ask questions and explore your treatment options — including IDD Therapy where appropriate.

Call Chichester Physio on 01243 783040 and mention this free Sciatica Guide.

HEALTH DISCLAIMER

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We strive to provide accurate and helpful information regarding pain and injury management in this guide.

However, the examples and advice presented are based on common conditions we see at Chichester Physio and may not apply to every individual. Each person's symptoms, recovery process, and response to treatment can vary due to factors such as medical history, genetics, lifestyle, stress levels, adherence to treatment, and other psychosocial influences.

This guide is not a substitute for professional medical advice. A full assessment and physical examination by a qualified practitioner are necessary to determine the most appropriate treatment for your specific condition. While we provide expert care at Chichester Physio, the recommendations here cannot replace an in-person consultation.

We encourage you to seek professional assessment before beginning any new treatment plan. There is always a risk of further injury if appropriate medical guidance is not followed. No guarantees of specific results are made or implied in this report.

THANK YOU



Thank you for taking the time to read this report. We understand that living with pain can be challenging, and we are here to support you every step of the way. If you would like to learn more about how Chichester Physio can help, we invite you to book a **FREE telephone consultation** with our expert team.

How Do I Book My Free Phone Consultation?

Booking your **FREE telephone consultation** is quick and easy!

Visit our website: chichesterphysio.co.uk
Call us directly: 01243 783040

Our expert team is ready to help you take the first step towards relieving pain and restoring movement. Don't wait—book your consultation today!