

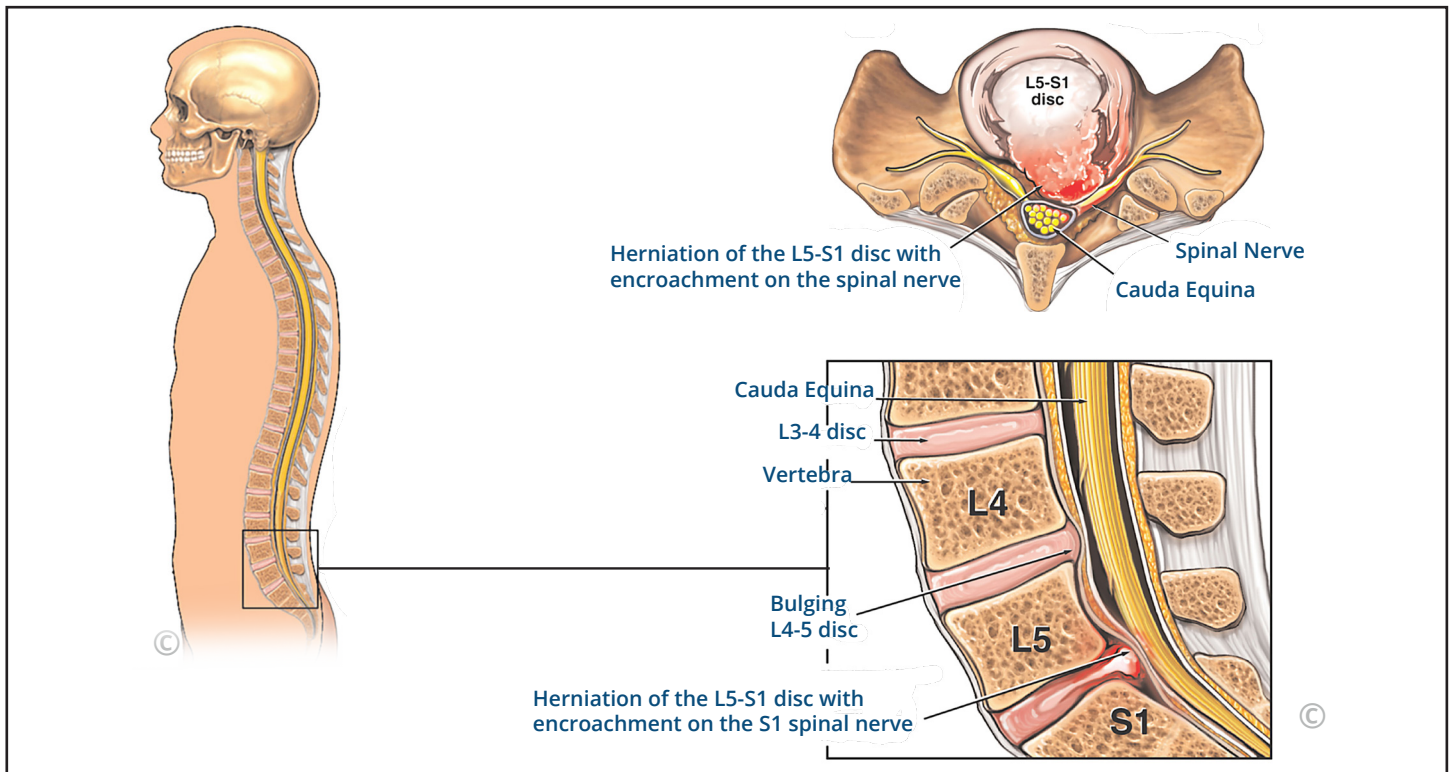
Disc Herniation with Radiculopathy

Patient Information Sheet

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What is Disc Herniation with Radiculopathy?

Intervertebral discs act as shock absorbers between the vertebra of the spine. When they herniate, they may compress one or more of the spinal nerves producing pain and other symptoms along the course of the nerve. This is known as radiculopathy. The condition is usually diagnosed by clinical examination, looking for changes to reflexes, muscle strength, skin sensation and the aggravation of symptoms produced by special maneuvers. CT or MRI is often performed to help confirm the diagnosis.

What are the symptoms?

- Low back pain and stiffness and leg pain worsened by bending forward, sitting, coughing or straining at the toilet.
- Numbness and/or pins and needles in the leg as well as a loss in leg muscle strength.

How is it treated?

Treatment could include application of ice, rest, massage, joint manipulation and mobilization, exercises, stretches and the use of modalities such as laser and ultrasound. Medication for pain and inflammation control may be necessary. In severe or deteriorating cases, local injection or surgery may be required.

What can I do?

- Follow the advice given to you by your practitioner.
- Perform your prescribed exercises daily within your pain tolerance.
- Stop exercises if they worsen your symptoms and inform your practitioner so that adjustments can be made to your exercise plan.
- Avoid any aggravating activities.
- Follow a healthy life style including diet, exercise, sleep and avoidance of alcohol and smoking.

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