

Orthopaedic Connection

How Is Your Sacroiliac?

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Transforming patient information into patient understanding.

Maybe a better question to begin is – What is your sacroiliac? Of course, most people will point to their lower back somewhere around the waist.

O.K. so you know approximately where it is, but what is it? A joint. Very good. For 99% of people that's about as far as they can go. No problem, that is why you are here (I hope!).

It is Big

Actually there are two separate joints one to the right and one to the left. The sacrum itself is a huge bone compared with the other bones of the spine. The lower part of your back called the lumbar spine sits on top of the sacrum.

The sacrum which is part of the spine connects the spine to the upper part of your pelvic bone that is called the ilium.

Did I lose anybody there?

The connection of these bones on the right and left is called – right! The sacroiliac joints. See how easy anatomy is.

One Tough Joint

The sacroiliac joint has a little movement, but not very much compared with practically any other joint.

Its job is to support the upper body and act as a shock absorber between the entire spine and the pelvis. That is a very big job.

It is held together by some very strong ligaments and to a certain extent by muscles in the lower back and buttock area.

The other structures in our back above the sacroiliac joints move to a much greater degree than the SI joint does.

The Bad Back

Lower back pain is one of the most common ailments in medical practice. It's not just old people.

It is the most frequent cause of activity limitation for people younger than 45 years.

The curse of the bad back. Dang, it we hadn't started to walk on 2 legs rather than 4 all those years ago we would not have all this trouble! Not entirely true because animals walking on 4 legs do have back problems too on occasion, but nothing compared to us humans.

I'm writing about sacroiliac trouble because there has been an increased emphasis on it in recent years. You will read and hear things about it so I want you to understand the true facts.

I stress that I am only covering the SI joint not back trouble in general.

Many causes of SI Trouble

1. Injury – recent or long ago. A fall onto a hip. A motor vehicle accident.
2. Repetitive twisting – swinging a golf club, bowling, shoveling (off balance motions)
3. Stress – jogging in some people
4. Previous spine surgery

5. Muscular weakness in hip and trunk areas
6. Osteoarthritis
7. Inflammation from autoimmune diseases
8. Tumor in the SI joint

Pattern of Symptoms

It's not the shooting pain of sciatica. It is deep and aching in the lowest part of the back at the level of the pelvis and buttocks to one side rarely both. Pain can extend to the knee but rarely below. Pain often occurs suddenly. May be worse standing or walking.

Looks like I am out of space. I will look forward to seeing you next week.

My patients put their trust in me and what I do improves the quality of their lives.

Gratiot County Herald Archive and Office Website.

I sincerely appreciate all of you loyal readers and patients present and future and welcome all newcomers!

Besides what you read today there is a huge treasure trove of Orthopaedic and musculoskeletal information at www.orthopodsurgeon.com. It contains the Website Library, Your Orthopaedic Connection and complete archive of every GCH article I have written.

I specialize in you. Be well.

Dr. Haverbush