



Don't Let Spinal Stenosis Slow You Down!

What is spinal stenosis?

Spinal Stenosis refers to the narrowing of the canals in your spine that are formed by the vertebrae. This narrowing can impinge on the nerves exiting your spine or the spinal cord itself. Symptoms can vary, but often include radiating pain to the back, buttocks and even legs. Furthermore, weakness and poor balance in the legs can often occur, making it difficult to tolerate walking long distances and prolonged standing.

Foraminal stenosis

This is the most common form of spinal stenosis. It refers to the narrowing of the foramen canals on either side of the spine formed by the vertebrae above and below the segment. In each canal, spinal nerves exit the lower back to supply different parts of the pelvis and legs. With age and deterioration

of the discs between the spine, the canals shrink in size and may also have bone spurs. This irritates the nerve roots, especially when the spine is extended. Sitting typically feels better, but standing and backwards bending increase pain.

Is surgery needed?

There is a big push towards fusion surgery for spinal stenosis and back pain. However, studies show that surgery should be a last resort, before conservative measures such as physical therapy are performed. In the vast majority of cases, surgery is not needed and people will have significant if not complete relief of their symptoms with physical therapy. Physical therapy targets the muscles and joints of the spine to build strength, improve stability of the spine and maintain the foramen as open as possible.

“It’s Time To Relieve Your Stenosis Pain!”

Spinal stenosis is a mechanical problem of movement in your body. While medication may help to numb the pain, it does not fix the underlying mechanical problem. Here are tips on how you can improve your stenosis and back pain symptoms:



1. ICE

Icing at the low back area on the affected side helps to decrease the inflammatory process. Use a flexible ice pack with a moist thin towel to make it easier to tolerate the ice. Use for 10 minutes and off for 30 minutes. Make sure to check your skin often and stop if it becomes painful. Apply 2-3 times a day, especially after repetitive bending or standing activities.

2. Improve Hip and Spine Flexibility

Restoring natural movement to the spinal joints, hip joints and sacroiliac joints, helps to relieve abnormal pressures on the sciatic nerve. It allows your body to move freely when doing normal everyday tasks and prevents injury and strains. Care should be taken when stretching to be gentle and work with your breathing. Never push through pain and avoid exercises that aggressively extend the spine.

3. Strengthening Your Core

Your core muscle groups are the spinal muscles, abdominal muscles, pelvic and hip muscles. By doing exercises that combine these muscle groups together you can develop an internal corset that supports your spinal column. Gentle Pilates and core strengthening exercises are good, however, be sure to consult your physical therapist before starting exercises you are unsure of doing.

4. Manual Physical Therapy

Hands on specialized manual physical therapy techniques restore the natural movements of the spinal, hip and sacroiliac joints. This helps to open the foraminal canals in the spine. Physical therapists are the unique medical professionals who are trained extensively in these types of techniques.



Patient Spotlight

I enjoy playing with my kids longer!

"After physical therapy, I can do all my work more efficiently. I enjoy playing with my kids longer than I had 2 months prior to physical therapy. It's now easier for me to also do any necessary housework as well." - Z.W.



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Relieves a tight lower back

Double Knee to Chest

Lying on your back. Pull both knees to your chest. Hold for 10 seconds and feel the stretch. Repeat 6 times.



Keeps the body flexible

Single Knee to Chest

Lie on your back. Hug your knee. Keep your opposite leg bent. Hold for 10 seconds and feel the stretch. Switch legs. Repeat 6 times.



If you are suffering with back pain or spinal stenosis, don't put off getting help as your condition weakens the spine further and can set you up for more extensive injury in the future. Call us today to speak with one of our physical therapists and see for yourself, what a difference our SPINE program can make for your back.

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Has Your Pain Returned?



1. Feel free to call us and ask to speak to your therapist.



2. Your therapist can discuss with you why your pain is bothering you again and what you might do about it at home.



3. If further assessment is warranted, your therapist might recommend you come in for an appointment.

Call Today 510-745-7700

Give The Gift of Health



If you know someone suffering with aches and pains give the gift of health. Refer them to iMotion Physical Therapy today. Pass along this newsletter or have them call us directly for a Free Back Pain Relief Consultation.

Do You Have Friends or Family Unable to Do The Following?

- Move without pain
- Bend and move freely
- Balance confidently and securely
- Sit for long periods comfortably
- Walk for long distances
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555 Mowry Ave, Suite E
Fremont, CA 94536
Phone: 510-745-7700
Fax: 510-279-4300

Los Gatos Location:
14981 National Ave, Suite 5
Los Gatos, CA 95032
Phone: 408-637-4777
Fax: 408-413-1317



Pratik Shah, PT • We take the time to listen to you

- Expertly trained therapists
- Focused on achieving fast results
- We spend time educating you
- Friendly, courteous staff
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Sweetie Shah, PT

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