

[IMAGE]

## **Get Out of Bed and Fight Back Pain**

The classic symptom of sciatica is shooting pain down the back of the leg, often accompanied by back pain. Clinical management of sciatica and low back pain (LBP) involves a variety of approaches, including bed rest - although evidence suggests that bed rest does little or nothing to reduce LBP or any spine-related conditions.

The Cochrane Collaboration Back Review Group conducted a recent systematic review of clinical trials (considered one of the highest forms of research evidence) comparing bed rest with other approaches to managing LBP and sciatica. Nine studies meeting predetermined criteria were included in the final analysis, representing study results for 1,435 patients. Overall, results showed no significant differences in pain intensity or functional status following bed rest, leading the authors to draw three powerful conclusions:

- 1) Bed rest is not effective in the treatment of low back pain.
- 2) Bed rest may have slightly harmful effects on acute LBP.
- 3) No further research on the role of bed rest in the treatment of acute LBP is necessary.

### *Reference:*

Hagen KB, Hilde G, Jamtvedt G, et al. The Cochrane review of bed rest for acute low back pain and sciatica. *Spine* 2000; Vol. 25, No. 22, pp2932-39.

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