April Newsletter 2013

Guilford Orthopaedic and Sports Medicine Center
A Division of Southeastern Orthopaedic Specialists, P.A.
"We work to keep you playing"

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Happy Easter from Guilford Orthopaedic and Sports Medicine Center!!

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Dr. Dumonski shares some thoughts on dealing with "sciatica"

"Sciatica" is the condition that results when a nerve in the low back becomes irritated or pinched. The medical term for such a condition is "lumbar radiculopathy", but the term most commonly used in the general public is "sciatica". Symptoms most commonly involve pain in the buttock, extending into the back or outside of the thigh, into the shin or calf, and often times into the foot. There are a variety of causes for a nerve in your back becoming irritated or pinched, but the most common reason by far is a "herniated" disc in the low back. A disc "herniation" is simply a small fragment of disc that has moved into an abnormal spot in the spinal canal where it doesn't belong. The condition is also commonly referred to as a "slipped disc" or a "ruptured disc". Because there are nerves immediately behind each disc in the low back, disc herniations commonly result in pressure on these nerves, and ultimately, "sciatica". If you have this condition, the first thing to know is that the vast majority of patients with "sciatica" will go on to have complete resolution of symptoms with nothing more than giving the condition time, and at times some straightforward medications, when indicated. A common concern I often hear expressed is whether the condition might lead to paralysis or permanent impairment if surgery is not performed expeditiously. While there are very rare conditions that can lead to permanent impairment if not treated expeditiously, these situations are, in fact, exceedingly rare, and most often permanent impairment is not of any concern. In situations where pain has been ongoing or severe despite appropriate nonoperative measures, surgery may be indicated. If surgery is ultimately required, it is generally in the form of a minimally invasive "microdiscectomy" procedure, whereby the portion of the disc irritating the nerve is removed. This is generally a 1-hour, outpatient surgery with outcomes reported to be favorable, as compared to nonoperative care (after appropriate nonoperative care has been instituted). As with any condition, surgical and nonsurgical treatment for"sciatica" should always involve an informed and thorough discussion with your physician outlining the risks and benefits of all available treatment options.

Guilford Orthopaedics strives to ensure the best experience and availablity to ALL our patients!

We are open Saturdays from 9am until 1pm.
Be sure to call 336-275-3325 to schedule your appointment.

If after hours please visit our Urgent Care located at 201 E Wendover Avenue Greensboro, NC 27401 or call 336-235-BONE(2663) they are open M-F 5:30pm until 9pm and Sat./Sun. 10am until 2pm.