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Spinal stenosis

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With Mayo Clinic neurologist **Jerry W. Swanson, M.D.** [read biography](#)

Question

Pseudoclaudication: Is it related to claudication?

What is the difference between claudication and pseudoclaudication?

Answer

from Jerry W. Swanson, M.D.

Pseudoclaudication and claudication cause similar symptoms — typically, lower limb pain while standing or walking — but for different reasons.

Pseudoclaudication is a result of narrowing of the lumbar spinal canal (lumbar spinal stenosis). This puts pressure on the spinal nerve roots, which control movement and sensation in the lower limbs. Claudication, on the other hand, is a symptom of peripheral artery disease, a circulation problem that results in decreased blood flow in the arteries that supply blood to muscles below the waist.

Pseudoclaudication typically causes pain and discomfort in the buttocks, thighs, legs and feet with walking or prolonged standing. You may also experience numbness and weakness in your legs. The pain of pseudoclaudication typically is relieved by sitting or bending forward at the waist, which reduces nerve pressure. Treatment of pseudoclaudication is directed at reducing the spinal stenosis.

References

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