



# Health

(/health)

## Radiculopathy

### ⓘ WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Radiculopathy describes a range of symptoms produced by the pinching of a nerve root in the spinal column.

The pinched nerve can occur at different areas along the spine (cervical, thoracic or lumbar).

Symptoms of radiculopathy vary by location but frequently include pain, weakness, numbness and tingling.

A common cause of radiculopathy is narrowing of the space where nerve roots exit the spine, which can be a result of stenosis, bone spurs, disc herniation or other conditions.

Radiculopathy symptoms can often be managed with nonsurgical treatments, but minimally invasive surgery can also help some patients.

## What is radiculopathy?

Your spine is made of many bones called vertebrae, and your spinal cord runs through a canal in the center of these bones. Nerve roots split from the cord and travel between the vertebrae into various areas of your body. When these nerve roots become pinched or damaged, the resulting symptoms are called radiculopathy.

## Types of Radiculopathy

Radiculopathy can have different symptoms and different names depending on where in the spine it occurs.

### Lumbar Radiculopathy

When radiculopathy occurs in the lower back, it is known as lumbar radiculopathy, also referred to as sciatica ([http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/healthlibrary/conditions/adult/spine\\_shoulders\\_and\\_pelvis\\_disorders/sciatica\\_85,p01382/](http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/healthlibrary/conditions/adult/spine_shoulders_and_pelvis_disorders/sciatica_85,p01382/)), because nerve roots that make up the sciatic nerve are often involved. The lower back is the area most frequently

affected by radiculopathy.

## Cervical Radiculopathy

Cervical radiculopathy describes a compressed nerve root in the neck (cervical spine). Because the nerve roots in this area of the spine primarily control sensations in your arms and hands, this is where the symptoms are most likely to occur.

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