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Pinched Nerve

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS)

Source

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS). [Pinched Nerve Information Page.](#)

The term "pinched nerve" is a colloquial term and not a true medical term. It is used to describe one type of damage or injury to a nerve or set of nerves. The injury may result from compression, constriction, or stretching. Symptoms include numbness, "pins and needles" or burning sensations, and pain radiating outward from the injured area. One of the most common examples of a single compressed nerve is the feeling of having a foot or hand "fall asleep." A "pinched nerve" frequently is associated with pain in the neck or lower back. This type of pain can be caused by inflammation or pressure on the nerve root as it exits the spine. If the pain is severe or lasts a long time, you may need to have further evaluation from your physician. Several problems can lead to similar symptoms of numbness, pain, and tingling in the hands or feet but without pain in the neck or back. These can include peripheral neuropathy, carpal tunnel syndrome, and tennis elbow. The extent of such injuries may vary from minor, temporary damage to a more permanent condition. Early diagnosis is important to prevent further damage or complications. Pinched nerve is a common cause of on-the-job injury.